

IN THESE TIMES

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TO SOUTH KOREA

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Illustration: Peter Hannan

BATTLE OF THE BUDGET

Weapons and more weapons

By David Corn

Last year when Budget Director David Stockman went hunting for fat in the federal budget, he trained his sites on the Pentagon. While Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was on a European tour, Stockman tried to persuade President Reagan to accept modest military spending cuts of \$11.1 billion. Upon his return to Washington, Weinberger vanquished Stockman. The result: Reagan's fiscal year 1986 budget granted the Pentagon a whopping \$313.7 billion in budget authority and \$277.5 billion in actual military spending. If Congress accepts this—which is unlikely—Reagan could lay claim to the largest U.S. military budget since the end of World War II.

With Weinberger's victory over Stockman, the debate over military spending shifted from the White House to Capitol Hill, where Congress members have been in search of deficit reduction. So desperate have some become that Reagan's military budget is in jeopardy—but not great jeopardy. Even though much of the battle over the budget has focused on the Pentagon's take, the most realistic predictions have Congress shaving only a percentage point or two off the 5.9 percent real growth Reagan and Weinberger want. Still, many Congress members, with Senate Republicans taking the lead, have been complaining more than usual about the Pentagon's purse.

What has got even the Republicans so upset is a military budget seemingly out of control, actually fueling the deficit. The following are some key facts and figures regarding Reagan's proposed military budget, courtesy of the Defense Budget Project at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington, D.C.:

- In fiscal year 1980 the deficit was \$74 billion. Now it is about \$180 billion. At the same time, Defense Department spending has grown from \$131 to \$278 billion.

- Weinberger's claim that he has already cut \$35.9 billion in the FY 1986 budget rings hollow. These "cuts" are based on an unrealistic starting point that assumed a budget much greater than that of FY 1985. If the military is held to the same accounting as other branches of the government—if there is less money after inflation, it's a cut; if there's more, it's an increase—the Pentagon has won itself a \$21 billion increase in spending and has contributed the same amount to the deficit.

- Although Reagan's budget has forced the Pentagon to live with 5.9 percent real growth—instead of the 9.2 percent hike it had hoped for—it has found a way to make up the difference. It has raised its predicted spending increases for FY 1987 (from 3.5 to 8.2 percent) and FY 1988 (from 3.8 to 8.8 percent). Apparently, what it "loses" this year, it will seek to recoup in the near future.

- Under Reagan's plan, military spending will have risen 49.1 percent in real terms between FY 1980 and FY 1986. Between FY 1980 and FY 1990, it will rise 90.5 percent in real terms.

Where is all this money going? Put simply, to weapons and more weapons. That may not seem so unusual, but what is noteworthy is just how much weapons have come to dominate the military budget. Military spending can be divided roughly into three areas—the acquisition of weapons, operating and maintaining equipment and military installations, and personnel costs. It is the Pentagon's weapons shopping list that is currently driving the military budget to such high levels. According to a budget breakdown provided by the Defense Budget Project, budget authority for investment (which includes research, development and procurement of nuclear and conventional weapons, plus military construction) will increase 14.2 percent—from \$141 billion to \$161 billion—over the FY 1985 figure, under the Reagan plan. In essence, the Pentagon is turning into a weapons warehouse.

By comparison, funding for operation and maintenance will rise 5.5 percent, just a little more than inflation, to \$82.5 billion, and personnel will increase 7.3 percent, to \$73.4 billion. Furthermore, while weapons expenditures accounted for 37.7 percent of the military budget in FY 1980, with the current proposal they make up half of all military spending. In this same period, operation and maintenance funds dropped from 33 percent to 26.3 percent of the military budget. As the Defense Budget Project notes, "There will be pressure in future years to increase operation and maintenance spending to make up this growing gap."

Strategic weapons, comprised mostly of nuclear systems, in particular, represent the fastest growing part of the military budget. Between FY 1980 and FY 1986, spending on strategic weapons will have increased 305 percent, if Reagan has his way. His budget proposal includes stepped-up spending on a number of strategic fronts. Topping the list are the B-1 bomber (\$6.2 billion) and the beleaguered MX missile (\$4 billion). But where the administration is truly accelerating its effort is space weapons. Funding for the so-called Strategic Defense Initiative, better known as Star Wars, is slated to practically triple (from \$1.39 billion in FY 1985 to \$3.72 billion in FY 1986). The budget also calls for spending on antisatellite weapons to rise 26 percent.

THE STORY

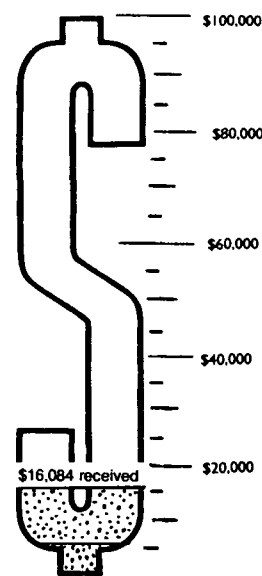
Other strategic systems due for large increases include the sea-launched cruise missile (30 percent); the new Midgetman missile, planned as a follow-on to the MX (36 percent); and the Trident II submarine-launched missile, regarded as a potential first-strike threat by critics on Capitol Hill (26 percent).

As weapon costs have come to dominate the military budget, military research and development has come to overwhelm all other federal R&D. Under Reagan's budget, military research and development would rise by \$7.8 billion, or 22 percent, over the FY 1985 level, while all other government R&D would drop by \$500 million. (Much of this acceleration in military R&D is being propelled by the Star Wars program.) The proposed budget provides military R&D more than 72 percent of the entire federal R&D budget, up from 50 percent in 1981. Reagan wants to cut federal R&D for health and human services \$313 million, or 5.7 percent.

The militarization of R&D is just one problem brought on by the increased emphasis on weapons acquisition. "As weapons spending occupies a larger share of the defense budget, it becomes harder to control the growth of defense spending," says the Defense Budget Project analysis. Each year, a portion of military spending is dictated by contracts signed in the past. This uncontrollable share of Pentagon outlays has increased from 27.2 percent of military spending in FY 1980 to a projected 38.2 percent in FY 1986. "As this share grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to control defense budget growth," the report notes. "If current trends continue, by the time a new administration takes office in 1989, roughly 40 percent of the defense budget will be beyond its control." That is, unless it wants to start cancelling contracts.

If the military budget is out of control, can it be stopped? With all the numbers flying by, can Congress effectively scrutinize the Pentagon's request and base funding on security needs? In the past, Congress has been loath to cut weapon programs or to close needless military installations. (Each base, remember, sits in somebody's district.) With military spending being spurred more and more by weapons expenditures, the prospects for reining in the budget do not appear good. If the current forecasts of the administration prove true, in 1990 the U.S., presumably at peace, will spend more money—in real terms—on its military than it did in the last year of World War II.

Despite all the tough talk now in fashion, there is little reason to expect Congress to deliver much more than a slight cut in the military budget's real growth rate—a cut that may focus mostly on operation and maintenance funds. Though some of the tough-talkers still speak wistfully of a military spending freeze, the debate on the Hill will inevitably narrow to 3 percent real growth versus 4 percent versus 5 percent. What remains assured is that even in the current atmosphere, Reagan's military budget—and all its implications for the future—will not receive the type of examination it deserves.



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In the second week of our \$100,000 fund drive things picked up a bit, but the results are still inadequate. Last week we received 207 contributions totalling \$10,543. This brings our overall total to \$16,084, from 382 subscribers.

This slow start may mean that the traditional wisdom about fund appeals is correct—that only a dire warning of imminent disaster can drive people to their checkbooks, or at least, get them to write our name on a check. We really don't want to make an emergency appeal unless it is truthful. And we certainly don't want that. But down the line this year we will have to do just that if we fall far short of our \$100,000 goal. So, please, save us both the trouble and send a large check now.

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IN THESE TIMES



By David Moberg

THE FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICIT may now have center stage in national politics, but another, possibly more important deficit has provoked increasing anxiety. Last year the U.S. ran up a record \$125 billion trade deficit, more than one-fourth of that on automobiles and parts.

That reflects a massive loss of jobs in this country and is a symptom of a knotty complex of economic problems, including an overly strong dollar, federal budget deficits and continued economic slump in most of the world. But it is also a tough political issue as well both domestically and internationally that can touch on everything from Europe's acceptance of cruise missiles to Latin American debt default and bank failures.

It has become a crisis not only for industries suffering from global shifts in production and low-wage competitors—classic problem cases such as steel, auto, textiles. Now it has spread throughout much of the American economy, from frostbelt to sunbelt, from agricultural commodities to high-tech communications equipment and semiconductors.

The first battle is likely to be fought over autos. A cabinet-level group last week recommended to President Reagan that the administration should not renew the voluntary export restraint agreement (VER) limiting Japanese exports of cars that expires at the end of March. But there is growing interest, even among normally militant free-trade conservative members of Congress, in some form of surcharge or tariff on imports across the board.

The Reagan administration has often departed from its free-trade rhetoric to institute some half-hearted protectionist measures. But it is opposed to linking such actions to effective intervention in the domestic economy and the private decisions of corporations.

As a result, the stop-gap measures are easy to criticize. Yet a free trade free-for-all might bring few benefits to the U.S. and massive dislocations everywhere. The alternative is not isolation but some form of negotiated, managed trade. Yet that requires greater management of the domestic economy and its transitions.

The voluntary restraint agreement, first introduced in 1981, was accepted under great pressure. First set for 1.68 million cars per year, it was renewed in 1983 at 1.85 million cars. Last year total imports accounted for 23 percent of a 10-million car market, up from 18 percent in 1978 but down from the peak of 28 percent. The Japanese share last year was 18.3 percent.

Have the export restraints worked? In some ways, yes. But the cost has been higher than necessary and the results less impressive than possible because it was a poorly conceived policy, not because control of imports was inherently a bad idea.

Yet the redistribution of income upward during the Reagan years, a drop in gasoline prices and the recession's effect on young and low-income buyers also explain why larger, fancier and more expensive cars sold well, and the small car share dropped from 37.3 percent of the market in 1981 to 29.1 percent in 1983, argues Dan Luria of the University of Michigan's Industrial Technology Institute.

Theoretically, small car prices should have risen most under VER, but prices of small cars from Chrysler and Ford, which respectively chalk up 50 and 30 percent of their sales in that category, went up less than half the average rate for cars during

this period. By contrast, nearly 85 percent of General Motors cars are large models. Its prices went up much faster, skewing the overall figures. Significantly, GM opposes continuation of Japanese export constraints, because it wants to import some compacts from Japan under its own labels. Ford and Chrysler desperately want them to continue.

As a result of higher prices and sale of more upscale models, Japanese companies have repatriated an extra \$1 billion a year in profits. That is one reason why companies such as Nissan and Toyota that have the lion's share of the quota are not unhappy with the arrangement. But smaller firms that were locked into a diminutive share, such as Mitsubishi and Mazda, will want to increase their exports if the lid is lifted.

Export restraints have helped the U.S. auto companies to swell their coffers—earning a record total of \$10 billion in profits last year, reducing their debt to equity levels to roughly 1978 levels (the last high sales year) and providing auto executives with huge raises and bonuses. Luria calculates that auto companies could have made their 1978 rate of return on investment last year by charging an average of \$700 per car less than they did.

Yet much of this profit bonanza reflects other causes. Auto workers have taken pay cuts or submitted to modest contracts during this time. Productivity has jumped by

By most calculations, the export restraints have saved jobs. Both Crandall and the ITC estimated around 26,000 in 1983 (44,100 in 1984, according to the ITC). But the UAW insists that if auto and supplier jobs are counted, the figure in 1983 should have been at least 88,000 jobs saved, perhaps as many as 150,000.

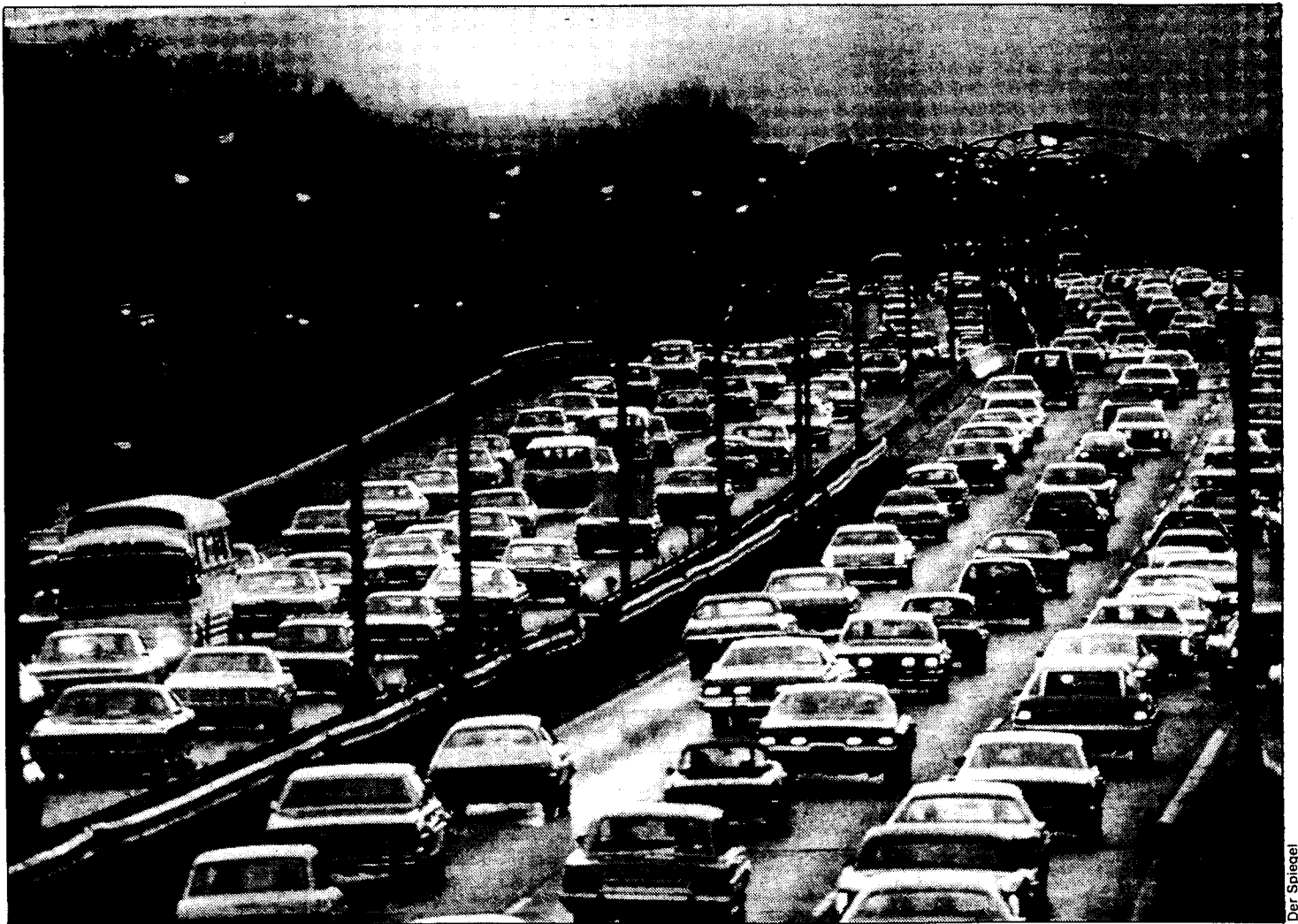
What will happen if the quotas are dropped? Their defenders will try to pressure Japan to continue the limits if Reagan simply decides not to ask for their renewal, but their task is more complicated if he publicly calls for their elimination. It is unlikely that informal restraint will work. Japan has capacity to double its exports to the U.S. in the next two years, according to Data Resources, Inc., with any new flood arriving in time to coincide with the next

Big Three plan to bring in roughly half a million small cars from Korea, Taiwan and Mexico by 1989. Those Korean cars—as well as increased imports from Japan—could undercut the rapidly growing investment by Japanese auto makers in U.S. factories. Soon these firms—Honda, Mazda, Nissan and others—will have a capacity of producing one million autos here annually.

Domestic companies, like some of the Japanese, have been poised between two strategies—produce for the U.S. market overseas or build facilities here. The export restraints have pushed both U.S. and Japanese companies toward greater domestic investment, but that could—and probably will—be drastically reversed without some form of import controls.

Yet the current system is about the worst

Will Japan flood U.S. with autos if quotas end?



Export restraints have helped U.S. auto companies swell their coffers. They earned \$10 billion in profits last year.

at least an average of 10 percent a year over the past five years, estimates David Cole, director of the Office for the Study of Automotive Transportation at the University of Michigan.

The auto companies invested heavily in new tooling, but they have not done all they could. They have not made a concrete commitment to building small cars in the U.S. GM has its much ballyhooed Saturn Project that will eventually produce a new subcompact, and the other big two have their own small car plans—Ford's Project Alpha and Chrysler's Concept 90. But GM will soon phase out production of its only domestic subcompact, the aging Chevette, and Chrysler still limps along with the Omni/Horizon.

At the same time, GM in particular, and potentially Ford, are looking for non-automotive investments. GM tried to justify its purchase of Electronic Data Systems as part of the computerization of cars and manufacturing, but is also shopping for a mortgage banker and other acquisitions that have nothing to do with building small cars.

auto slump. Since the Japanese are restricted in most other major markets—for example, to 7 percent of total sales in the Common Market—an open U.S. market would most likely be targeted. Both Japanese and U.S. administration trade officials have predicted there will be at least 650,000 more cars from Japan next year if restraints are lifted, and the UAW expects one million—eliminating 200,000 auto and related jobs.

As many as half those increased Japanese imports will be brought in by U.S. companies, primarily General Motors. GM wants the quotas dropped, because it has plans to import 300,000 cars annually from Suzuki and Isuzu, both of which it partly owns, making it the fourth largest importer. Chrysler has plans to import 120,000. It has also threatened to drop its small car Concept 90 plans and an estimated \$10 billion in domestic investment if the restraints are eliminated.

Yet even if the Japanese restraints are kept, domestic auto employment is threatened by other imports. Currently the

form such regulation could take. At least a tariff would produce revenue for the U.S. Treasury, which could be used to aid displaced workers or smooth the transition of the domestic industry, argues Howard Rosen, research associate at the Institute for International Economics. Now Japanese auto companies reap the benefits to strengthen themselves for further competition with U.S. manufacturers. The UAW would like to see domestic content legislation, which would much more efficiently force investment in the U.S. and maintain competition. Failing that, it wants a market share quota so that during the cyclical downturn, Japanese firms must share the crunch and cannot increase market share.

Luria insists that a long-term commitment is necessary, whatever the program. If quotas are lifted now, it will disrupt investment plans. Yet in a couple of years when imports are high and sales slump, political pressure for protection will again be hard to resist. He would favor a market share quota that permits a decline in domes-

Continued on page 10

INSHORT

Beth Maschinot

The voice of Koch?

Meddling by one of New York Mayor Koch's closest advisors in the selection of a new chief editor for the *Village Voice* has left the staff screaming "conflict of interest" and apprehensive that control-minded Koch may be closing in on the independent paper. According to staff writer Wayne Barrett, three weeks ago Dan Wolf, chief aide and close friend of Koch, had a 45-minute phone interview with a candidate for the recently opened editor job. Interviewee Rick Hertzberg (former editor of the *New Republic*) said that Wolf told him at the end of the interview that he thought Hertzberg was "too nice" and that he "wouldn't be ruthless enough" to handle the job. He also added that Hertzberg had "too much respect for *Voice* traditions."

When the *Voice* called Wolf to ask about the propriety of one of the mayor's closest advisors having a role in the selection of the next *Voice* editor, Wolf said it was only an informal interview and that he was not functioning as part of the search committee, according to Barrett. He added that "you'd have to be paranoid" to think that this was an attempt to gain a greater voice for Koch on the paper. Wolf claimed that he didn't even tell Koch about the interview, but that he was personally interested in the selection of the new editor since he was a founder and the original editor of the *Voice*.

The interview may be only a hint of what Koch is attempting, however. Other sources in New York say that some of Koch's closest friends and advisors (including Wolf and Dan Margoless, head of Colt Industries) have offered *Voice* owner Rupert Murdoch \$40 million for the paper. The status of the offer is unclear, but Wolf's interview may have shown Koch's hand.

When first we meet

In a surprise move in mid-February, the leader of Northern Ireland's moderate Catholic nationalist party, John Hume, announced that he would soon meet with the IRA army counsel. Hume said he would attempt to dissuade guerrilla leaders from violence, while an IRA communique accepting Hume's offer says that the IRA will try to persuade Hume that the only solution for their common constituency is a military one.

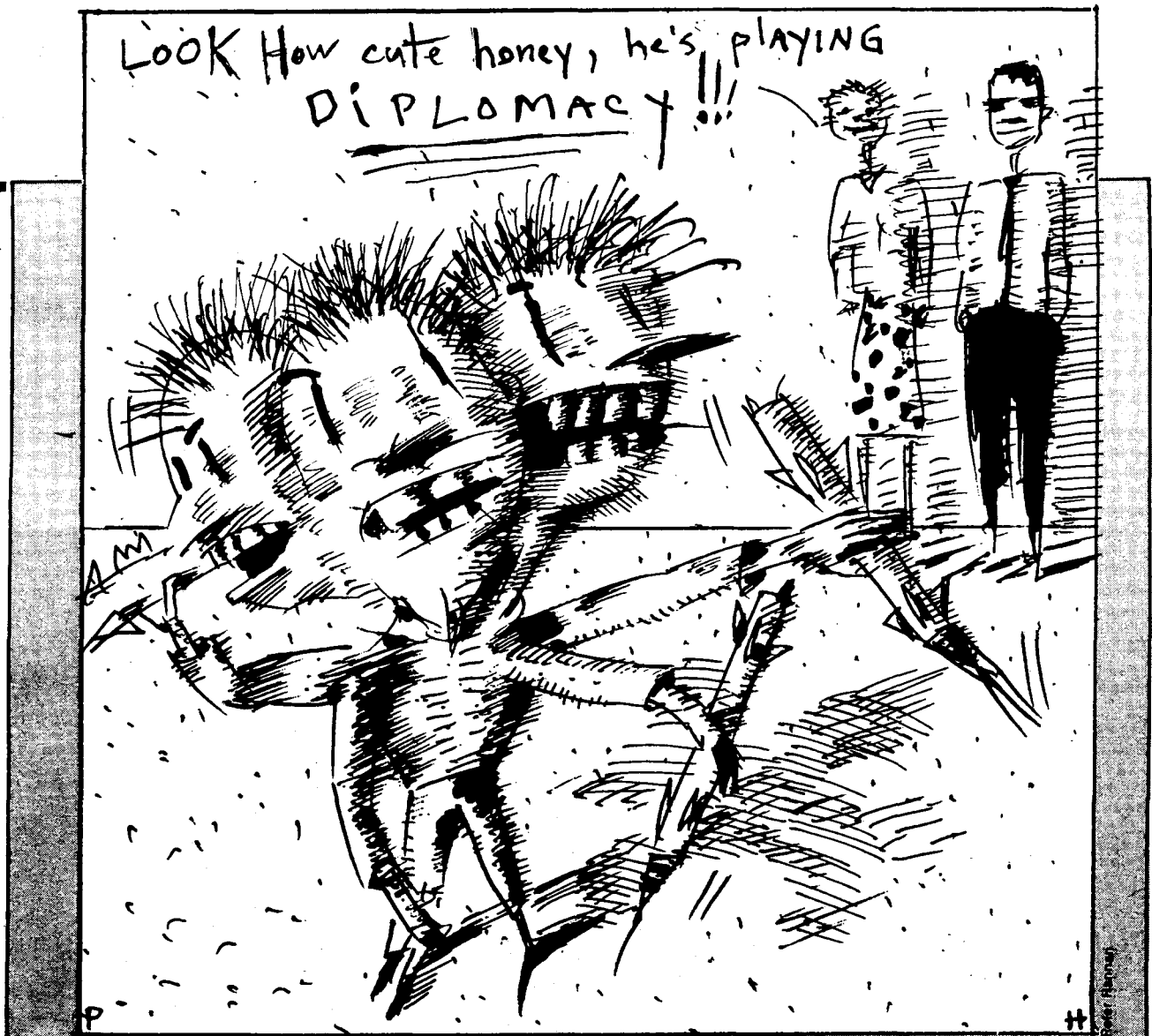
Hume and his Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) are under considerable pressure. Most observers think that the smaller but fast rising Sinn Fein—the political arm of the IRA—will take a few more seats away from SDLP candidates in the Northern Ireland local elections to be held in May. Hume himself has been under pressure from nationalist members of his own party, especially after Margaret Thatcher dismissed the New Ireland Forum Report (see *In These Times*, Dec. 19). Hume's offer to the IRA is at once an attempt to woo back nationalist support for himself and his party, and a move to embarrass Sinn Fein by exposing its dependence upon its secret anti-democratic IRA leadership.

But where would they talk? Irish Prime Minister Garrett Fitzgerald warned that if the meeting is held in the Republic everyone attending will be arrested. Thatcher's Northern Ireland Secretary Douglas Hurd was much milder. He refused to assure Unionist leaders that the authorities would interfere with the meeting.

Apartheid's cheerleader

Until a few months ago, the name Margaret McGoff meant very little to Michigan State University students. For most it was just a dimly remembered image that graces the Festival Stage of the multi-million dollar Wharton Center for Performing Arts. But due to the persistence of two East Lansing anti-apartheid groups, the students are getting to know Margaret and her husband John much more intimately. Besides giving a reported \$1 million to help construct the arts center, John McGoff is becoming increasingly known as one of the top American cheerleaders for the South African government.

McGoff has played an imaginative role in trying to paint a brighter picture of the apartheid regime for outsiders. With a long history of right-wing publishing in the U.S. behind him, McGoff was a front man for a scheme to plow money into a propaganda campaign that hinged on acquiring major newspapers across the globe. In 1974, McGoff—with the aid and support of three South African officials, including then Prime Minister



In the month, a letter from Ronald Reagan, urging participation in the Republican Presidential Task Force that will "work to keep the Senate in Republican hands for the next four years." The accompanying brochure promises rich rewards: a "personally commissioned Presidential Medal of Merit," a lifetime salary of \$120 a year, and the unique Congressional flag. And for those who want to go even further, the brochure offers a "lifetime salary of \$120 a year."

Roberto D'Aubuisson's supporter and Grand Francisco Quirós Becerra was arrested two weeks ago at a remote Texas airfield for trying to transport large amounts of undocumented money from the U.S. The right-wing Salvadoran businessman was caught with \$5.9 million in nine suitcases. The Christian Democrats in El Salvador immediately accused D'Aubuisson's ARENA Party of planning to use the money "to corrupt the electoral process" in the upcoming municipal elections.

Half of the students who start high school in Chicago drop out before they graduate, and in the de facto segregated high schools an astounding 62 percent of the students fail to make it out the door with a diploma, according to a recent study by Designs for Change, a local high school advocacy group.

a representative for a New York banking firm asked them all sorts of out-of-line questions during a job interview, including whether the women would have an abortion to save their jobs. The interviewer for Goldman, Sachs and Co. said he only wanted to find out if the candidates would "go to the end of the world to be a professional."

Sanctuary churches in Chicago marked the floor of the Immigration and Naturalization Service building with ashes last week to herald the first day of the Christian season of Lent and to "call the government to repent for its Central American policies."

"Lead poisoning" was recently redefined in the Center for Disease Control's "Morbidity and Mortality

Weekly Report." A lead level of 50 micrograms per deciliter used to be the danger mark, but now 35 micrograms is thought to be harmful. Though the CDC didn't say what prompted the change, the report did add that lead poisoning is now a threat to children of "urban homesteaders"—those upwardly mobile professionals who are braving the urban jungle.

Harvard University sold 60,000 shares of stock in the Baker International Corporation last week, according to the *Harvard Crimson*. Baker makes mining equipment and has extensive dealings with South Africa. It was the first implementation of Harvard's 1978 promise to hold companies responsible for the university's code of ethics for investing. Harvard has an estimated \$565 million more invested in companies that deal with South Africa.

Friendly prostitutes in Amarillo, Texas, may have a problem. A city ordinance just passed makes it against the law for known prostitutes to wave their arms at passing cars. City attorney Merrill Nunn says the women will have a chance to explain who they're waving at, but "generally the police don't have any problem knowing what's going on."

John Vorster—put up \$25 million in an attempt to buy the ailing *Washington Star*. When the deal fell through, McGoff settled for the *Sacramento Bee* and later purchased the United Press International Television Network, a London-based news outlet. But in 1978, a Johannesburg newspaper tied McGoff and the South Africans to the purchases, and an investigative commission was set up that eventually censured McGoff and the three South Africans.

Another publishing venture in South Africa fell through about the same time. A company started by McGoff produced Afri-Comics, a line of comic books whose hero was half black man, half tiger and who valiantly worked to save the apartheid regime from destructive forces. Production of the comics stopped, however, when newsstands carrying it were burned to the ground in Soweto in 1976.

For the past few years, the South African Liberation Committee and the African Students Union have been pressuring the MSU Board of Trustees to remove McGoff's name from the stage in a building named after the first black to head MSU, Clifton Wharton. Late last year, Margaret McGoff finally succumbed to the damning publicity, requesting her name to be removed

from the stage. In addition to removing her name, she asked the board to "return the funds at issue" even though they were "unselfishly given."

Missiles in the 'hood

Three American servicemen were killed and 16 injured January 11 when a Pershing II missile they were unloading suddenly burst into flames at a U.S. Army base near Heilbrunn, West Germany. But reports of the accident in the U.S. press did not mention that hot rocket parts were hurled within 250 yards of American nuclear warheads, according to *The Guardian* newspaper in Great Britain. *The Guardian* also reported that Heilbrunn's mayor condemned the U.S. Army's information policy regarding the accident. Six Heilbrunn residents have filed a lawsuit against deployment of the U.S. missiles, arguing that the missiles threaten public health and safety and violate the fundamental rights of West Germans.

This week's contributors: Tom Kiely, Susan Jaffe and Ken Wachsberger.

By Susan Jaffe

NEW YORK

THE NAVY IS LOSING THE WAR OF words over its scheme to turn this city into a nuclear homeport for the recommissioned World War II battleship, the *U.S.S. Iowa*. A defeat here would encourage anti-nuclear activists fighting homeporting on the Gulf and West Coasts, where the Navy wants to base two more *Iowa*-class war ships.

Already the U.S. government is so fearful of New Zealand's example—a small country balking a superpower's nuclear warships—that Washington is considering economic retaliation to prevent a wave of anti-nuclear sentiment in Europe and Japan. Fourteen nations that are nuclear-free zones have tried to block port calls by U.S. Navy nuclear ships. Why not New York as well?

Last month Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger attempted to silence concerned New York Congressmembers by threatening to cut the \$282 million port project, but economic blackmail didn't work. Rather than end the guessing game about whether the *Iowa* will bring nuclear missiles to New York, Weinberger only escalated the debate. Now most New Yorkers assume the missiles will be on the ship. (The Navy had previously confirmed that the *Iowa* is "nuclear-capable" and can carry 360 nuclear cruise missiles.)

So the questions Congressmembers now ask the Pentagon are about the likelihood of accidents, about the measures taken to prevent accidents like the Pershing II missile fire in West Germany and how to protect New York City as radiation wafts through the air.

"It's not a matter of reassurance," says Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY), the only New York Congressman who opposed the Navy port when it was proposed two years ago. "The federal government has to spell out what the dangers are and what localities can do to take care of problems that may arise. And considering where we've come in the course of the past year, I suspect that seeking information indicates a recognition that there may be problems in the project."

Weiss has requested that the General Accounting Office (GAO) investigate how the government would handle a nuclear accident, and several wavering Congressmembers claim the report will determine their support for the *Iowa*. Meanwhile, Weiss, who spearheaded the fight in Washington, is now joined by Democratic Reps. Ed Towns, Gary Ackerman, Robert Garcia and Major Owens in opposing the Navy base until the Navy guarantees that the *Iowa* is nuclear-free (exactly what the Navy would not do for New Zealand).

Another faction of the city's delegation—Democratic Reps. Charles Rangel, Stephen Solarz and James Scheuer—straddles the fence. The remainder—Guy Molinari (R), Joseph Addabbo (D), Thomas Manton (D), Bill Green (R), Mario Biaggi (D) and Charles Schumer (D)—are for the base. Senators Pat Moynihan (D) and Alfonse D'Amato (R) are also for it, even though D'Amato recently told reporters that it would be "reasonable" to expect the *Iowa* to carry nuclear weapons into New York.

In San Francisco, the Board of Supervisors voted in January to reject the Navy's plans for a similar nuclear homeport. Mayor Dianne Feinstein vetoed the resolution, which she said was the product of "a highly organized nuclear freeze movement" seeking "to use us [San Francisco] to send a message to Congress and the president." Turning away a nuclear battleship "is not the way to achieve nuclear control and arms reduction. The way is to keep this country strong while making every effort to successfully negotiate arms limitation and reduction agreements," Feinstein told the board.

But the sponsor of the resolution, Supervisor Richard Hongisto, predicts that Feinstein and the Navy will have a difficult time in San Francisco. "The Navy knows a majority of the board opposes homeporting," he said, "and we will block every piece of legislation facilitating deployment



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Anti-missile forces gaining momentum

of the ship. We wouldn't do this if we didn't have significant public support."

In New York City, even Mayor Ed Koch raised the issue of accidents in a letter to Navy Secretary John Lehman, although Koch now claims to be reassured. City Council President Carol Bellamy, a candidate for mayor, opposes the Navy port, as does her opponent, Herman (Denny) Farrell. Bellamy and Farrell want a guarantee from the Navy that the *Iowa* and its seven support vessels won't carry nuclear weapons into New York.

In addition to a growing list of major political figures who oppose the port, a majority of the city council supports a resolution by City Councilwoman Miriam Friedlander banning nuclear missiles in New York harbor. More than 100,000 New Yorkers have signed a petition endorsing Friedlander's resolution. And a committee representing a dozen New York-area unions—including Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8149, the New York local of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers and the Communications Workers of America Local 1180—is against the port.

All of this increasing opposition is due

The Navy confirmed that when the *Iowa* visited New York last fall it was carrying cruise missiles, but wouldn't say if the weapons were nuclear or conventional. A Navy official identified the long tubes pictured below as cruise missile launchers.



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to arduous lobbying by the Coalition for a Nuclear Free Harbor. The coalition consists of more than 150 community, peace, religious, labor, environmental and women's groups. They are determined, according to Tom DeLuce of Mobilization for Survival, to make the Navy base an issue in next year's mayoral race. Coalition members have already met personally with Bellamy and will soon meet with Farrell while Koch has refused meetings twice.

At this point, the *Iowa*'s future and the homeporting scheme depends on whether the Navy can convince elected officials that accidents won't happen. The U.S. Coast Guard has reported 609 major accidents involving 1,400 ships in New York harbor between 1976 and 1980. In 1981 the Pentagon acknowledged that there had been 32 nuclear weapons accidents. Several involved the spread of plutonium over wide areas, including the crash of B-52 bombers in Greenland and Spain during the '60s. In addition, as a result of a Freedom of Information suit, the Navy made public a summary of 379 accidents and incidents from 1965 to 1977—more than 30 mishaps a year.

In its final environmental impact statement on the *Iowa* base, the Navy insisted that the location of nuclear weapons is classified information and discussion of an accident involving those weapons is not required under a Supreme Court decision (*In Weinberger V. Catholic Action of Hawaii*

the Court ruled that because the location of nuclear weapons was secret, the Pentagon was not required to study the environmental consequences of weapons that did not officially exist). But an earlier draft of the section on nuclear weapons did address the issue of accidents, although it was later scrapped after city officials and Navy supporters saw it.

Part of the incriminating section read: "It is Department of Defense (DOD) policy that where possible, and within the constraints of security, the Navy will cooperate with and assist in development of emergency plans with appropriate state and local authorities for those DOD facilities where the potential exists for emergency situations. Such planning includes provisions for assisting state and local governments in carrying out their responsibility for public safety."

But New York City has no plans for dealing with a nuclear accident at the port. In 1982 the City Council voted to reject federal aid for civil defense. Spokespeople for the city departments of health, fire, police, sanitation and the Health and Hospitals Corporation say their agencies have never been in contact with the Navy, the Federal Emergency Management Agency or any other federal agency regarding emergency preparedness.

The only mention of emergency plans now in the Navy's final environmental study is a report contained in the appendix (but not distributed to the public) called "Nuclear Weapons Accident Response Manual," produced by the Defense Nuclear Agency. Despite elaborate diagrams of the chain of command, suggestions for "candid" press releases, hypothetical maps of the danger zone and even a recommended telephone tree, local agencies are ignored. There is no indication that anyone in New York is familiar with the manual, even if it could be implemented. But by including the manual, the Navy claims it is prepared for a nuclear accident, although it ignores the effect of that accident on New York. Federal law requires the Navy to analyze all environmental consequences of the port.

Yet the Navy seems determined to go ahead with the project: \$6.9 million in the defense budget just sent to Congress is earmarked as start-up funds for the port. In the appropriations debate, according to congressional sources, the Navy will have to answer questions about emergency planning as well as explain why the homeporting scheme is necessary at all in peacetime.

While the project faces congressional scrutiny, Navy Secretary Lehman is expected to approve the New York port in March. That's when the lawsuits begin. ■

Susan Jaffe covers nuclear issues for *The Village Voice*, where a version of this story co-authored with James Ridgeway also appeared.

MASSACHUSETTS

Residents organize against nerve gas tests

By Thomas Kiely

CAMBRIDGE, MA

IN 1982 WHEN ARTHUR D. LITTLE (ADL), a Cambridge-based research firm, contracted with the Defense Department to test several kinds of highly lethal nerve gas, company officials did not bother to consult residents who lived in the densely populated neighborhoods adjacent to the facilities. What company would? Corporations don't normally hold public hearings prior to management decisions, especially if they know those decisions will outrage the larger community.

Now ADL is locked in a courtroom battle with the city, which has ordered the company to cease testing the toxic materials. What particularly irks ADL is that the city's order and the resulting trial were sparked by a rapidly formed but highly effective group of residents from those ignored neighborhoods.

In October 1983, following a *Boston Globe* article about the nerve gas tests in their backyard, residents quickly organized under the aegis of the North Cambridge Toxic Alert. Utilizing phone networks and knocking door to door, the group grew quickly. Jose Avakian, a tenant organizer involved in the effort, said that up to 300 people show up at neighborhood meetings. From the start the group has been diverse, drawing together public housing residents, young professionals, blue-collar families and the elderly.

The media were immediately sympathetic to their concerns, as were one or two city councillors. Arthur D. Little contends that the city government knew of the company's research plans long before the testing began. But City Manager Robert Healy said the company overstates the city's early involvement. Although he and a few city councillors toured the lab, they were not qualified to judge the information they were given by company officials and had no understanding of the substances that were then already in the lab, according to Healy.

Under pressure from the neighborhood residents, however, the City Council appointed a scientific advisory panel. Based upon its recommendation that the lethal substances posed an unacceptable risk to the city, the health commissioner ordered a halt to all testing, storing or transporting of the substances.

ADL took the city to court. In December Superior Court Judge Robert Hallisey threw out ADL's contention that its research, since it is "in the interests of national sec-

urity," took "supremacy" over local health ordinances. But the court must still rule on the company's other motions to overturn the order. ADL's lawyer, Thomas Bracken, suggested that the supremacy ruling should be appealed before the other motions are heard.

In the meantime, the court issued a temporary restraining order against the city's ban, so that the company could continue its tests. According to the health commissioner's order, the Defense Department chemicals involved are soman-GD, sarin-GB, sarin-VX, mustard gas and Lewiste (blister) gas. Confusion as to whether ADL is helping to eliminate the substances, or merely to enhance the Defense Department's knowledge about them, has forced neighborhood residents to concentrate on the health risks, rather than on the nature of chemical weapons.

Arthur D. Little envisions a long, lucrative career for itself in the testing of hazardous chemicals, not just chemical weapons. ADL Vice President Alma Triner told *In These Times* that the company's new million-dollar laboratory wasn't constructed specifically for the defense contracts.

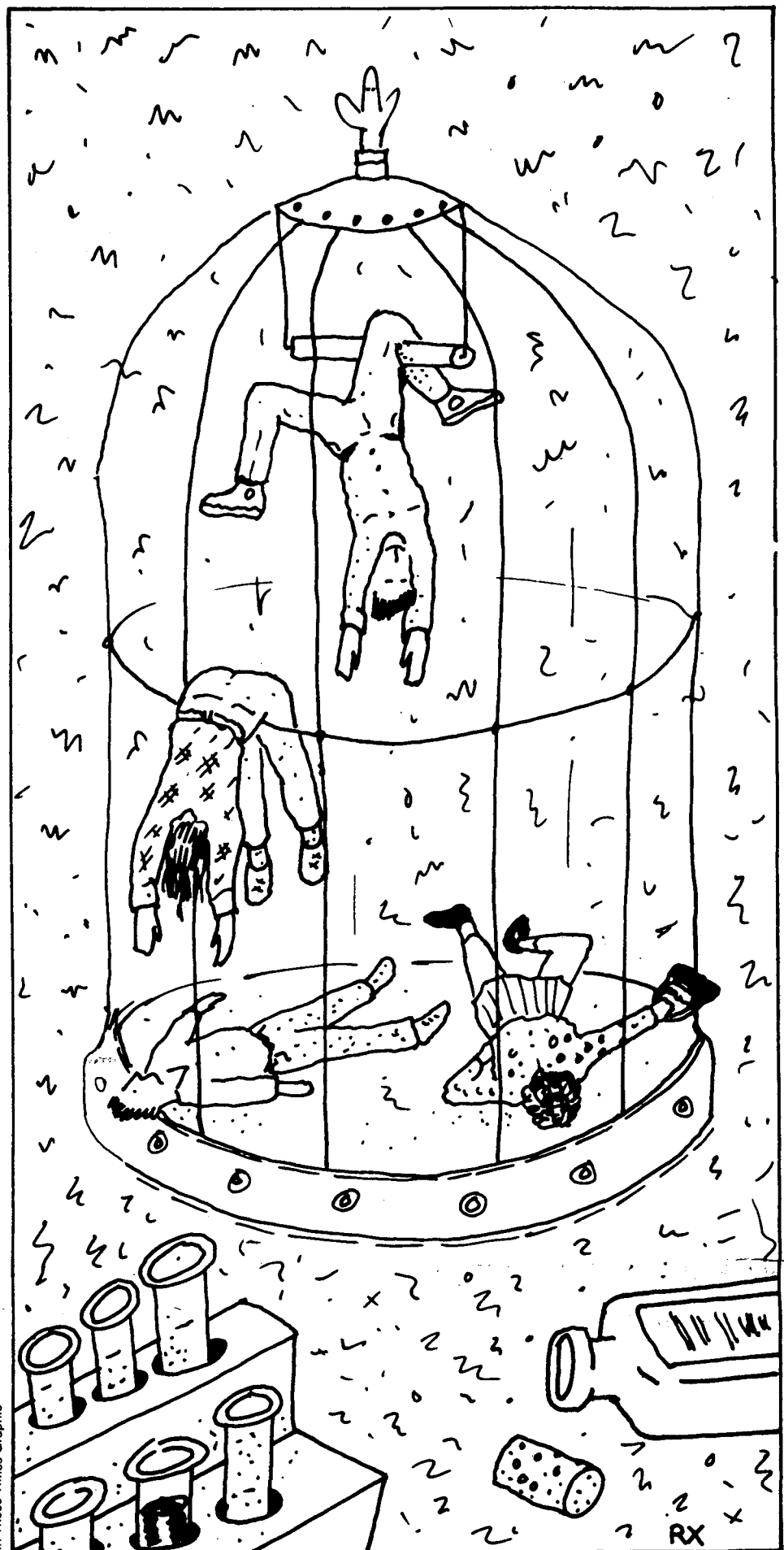
"There are a number of highly toxic substances around," she said, and researchers are currently working with some of those substances—none of which is cited in the health commissioner's ban.

Triner said that the lab was built to develop ways to determine minute quantities of toxic substances in the environment, to find ways to destroy those substances on a large scale and to develop better protective materials for use by those who will "clean up" the substances.

But according to ADL lawyer Bracken the defense specific research is aimed at "protecting soldiers from these substances" in combat or in peace.

Triner stressed that the lab was built to Department of Defense standards. "We don't just meet those standards—we exceed them."

But the only standards for laboratory safety in this area are written by the Defense Department. There are no EPA, OSHA or state guidelines for handling highly toxic substances. As Ed Cyr, a founder of North Cambridge Toxic Alert, said, "The people setting the standards for this kind of defense research are taking home a Defense Department paycheck." He also pointed out that while the military transports its hazardous chemicals itself, the procedures for transporting other toxic substances to and from the lab are suspect. "People at ADL admit-



In These Times Graphic

ted to us that they receive some of it through UPS."

Several residents told *In These Times* that the experience of organizing against the nerve gas testing has emboldened them to go after other targets. City residents have long battled the chemical-dumping W.R. Grace company. Now, in the wake of ADL's troubles, W.R. Grace is making an effort to be conciliatory. One resident expressed his enthusiasm this way: "ADL said to us, if you think what we're doing is bad,

just look at what so and so is doing. So we responded: great, make a list, we'll go after them, too."

Another resident, Steve Schnapp, said, "Not as many people would be involved if they didn't think they could change things." He is optimistic about their chances. If they are successful against Arthur D. Little, he said, one thing they will have accomplished is to show that "if all companies had to go through this, we'd all be better off."

Thomas Kiely is a Boston-based writer.

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By Cecilio J. Morales

WASHINGTON

ADVANCING THE HISPANIC community's hopes in Ronald Reagan's second term depends on keeping together the political house of cards built painstakingly at the grassroots. Yet with barely a breeze, Rep. Edward Roybal (D-CA) has made it shudder. Such is observers' assessment after Roybal recently introduced, without consulting his allies, an immigration bill that proposes fining employers who hire undocumented aliens.

The Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF) is now in the embarrassing position of having to oppose the bill on substantive and political grounds. And Hispanic Congressional Caucus chairman Rep. Bill Richardson (D-NM) is already working on an alternative to the proposal by Roybal, who up to now was the Hispanic dean on immigration—the issue that most touches the community.

Some profess to be unruffled by the Roybal gaffe. "I always knew Roybal was a lone ranger who can't shoot straight," Arnold Torres, legislative director of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) told *In These Times*. But underlying Torres' bravado is acute embarrassment and, deeper still, a profound sense that some political housecleaning within the Hispanic leadership is in order.

In 1984 Hispanic leadership mushroomed at every level. Latino delegates to the Democratic and Republican conventions increased notably. With 253 out of 3,931 delegates, the Hispanic Democratic delegation came close to numerically representing Latino Democrats, who make up 7 percent of the total. According to Jim Bruite, executive director of the Republican National Hispanic Assembly, the Hispanic delegate count in 1984 was triple that of 1980, although still less than 1 percent of the total.

On election eve last November, a 29 percent increase in Hispanic registered voters showed its impact in the poll tallies. At the state legislature level, although Hispanics made virtually no gain in the two key states, California and Texas, they doubled their representation in Florida, gained eight seats in New Mexico, two in Colorado and won a second seat in Illinois. In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Democrat Ralph Acosta became the first Hispanic in the state legislature in 10 years. While blacks made no gains in Congress, Hispanics acquired their tenth voting member, former Bexar County, Texas, Judge Albert Bustamante.

But so far the significance of such results is only numerical. One Hispanic put it another way. To the classic Reagan question, "Will you be better off four years from now than you are today?" he replied, "Four years from now I'll be older, but wiser."

Gap in representation.

One reason for skepticism is political. If it is true, as the Arabic saying has it, that your enemy's enemy is your friend, Hispanics are in trouble. Of the nine voting Hispanic representatives in the 98th congressional session, only two, Esteban Torres (D-CA) and Robert Garcia (D-NY), scored zero out of a possible 100 points in the American Conservative Union's *Rating of Congress*.

The powerful Kika de la Garza (D-TX), who sits on the House Agriculture Committee, scored 60, and, predictably, Manuel Lujan (R-NM) got a rating as high as 80. According to the right-wingers, the remaining Hispanic Congressmembers had middling voting records, which are likely to keep them off White House political hit-lists. These are not the best paladins of a group that faces a long socio-economic climb. Despite the unquestionable emergence of a Hispanic middle class in the past two decades, Hispanics are still mired economically by, among other things, 17.4 percent unemployment and high school dropout rates that range between 19.4 (Cubans) and 22.9 (Puerto Ricans).

Richard Fajardo, an attorney with the Washington MALDEF office, attributes the political gap to "a lack of political maturity"



Photographer unknown

POLITICS

National Hispanic leadership in disarray

among Hispanics. A specialist in immigration, he complains that people at the grass-root level are often confused by the complexities and the media. He adds that they only discover they remain targets of discrimination when the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) raids their neighborhoods.

"Also, to give [the leaders] the benefit of the doubt, they're trapped. Do they bide their time and advance into influential pos-

Many leaders have not wanted to be confused with working-class Hispanics.

itions by playing the game, like members of the Black Congressional Caucus have done with some success, or do they go all out now and lose power?" Fajardo asked.

LULAC's Torres thinks leaders reflect their Hispanic constituency, even if they do so ineffectively. "Hispanics are neither decidedly on the left, nor on the right. They're somewhere in the middle," he said.

Other theories abound. An ethnicist view holds that Hispanics "culturally" prefer *caciquismo*, or chieftain rule—a notion that is supported by reference to authoritarian leaders in Latin America. Even Marx and Engels fell prey to such an idea regarding the people in the Hispanics' homeland, Latin America, but the region's progressive

tradition has historically rejected such opinions as "Europe-centered."

Another theory suggests that Hispanics and the U.S. are too diverse to unify and exact accountability from their leaders. This one is thornier since Hispanics, on the whole, include in their ranks the racial rainbow—black, brown and white—and they come from a score of countries. Yet, despite the tragic history of race relations in Latin America—especially during the Spanish Conquest—the races have become intermingled beyond recognition in most areas. Also, because of the common language and a common culture, the region is often an example of internationalism. Most Latin Americans today think of the region, rather than their own country, as their homeland. Neither of these views, however, fully explains the lack of strong national leadership.

An incisive analysis was offered in 1981 by Rodolfo Acuna, author of the classic Chicano history *Occupied America*. Acuna wrote that since the '70s, a class of "brokers" acceded to positions of political leadership, serving as middlemen between the American power structures and Hispanics. They may be sincere, Acuna noted, but "their jobs and upward mobility depend on serving the system and not the people."

Anglo guile has definitely played a role in designing token political participation of Hispanics. This appears to be true in the cases of San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros and Civil Rights Commission staff director Linda Chavez. Cisneros got next to nothing in exchange for keeping the Hispanic caucus at the Democratic convention from bolting from the Mondale ranks. The

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Rep. Ed Roybal has made a bad gaffe.

Viva Reagan crowd, whose standard-bearers include Chavez, can claim no achievement other than securing well-paid jobs for at least four years.

Also, in recent years many U.S. leftists have concentrated their energies on trips to Nicaragua and international groups, rather than on developing the solidarity and acumen to work with potential Hispanic allies here at home. And it is an embarrassing paradox that liberals and leftists working on Latin American issues are overwhelmingly white. But several Hispanic organizations are now beginning to organize their own initiatives on Latin America, demonstrating that, like blacks—or any ethnic group—they are concerned with domestic issues and U.S. foreign policy toward the homeland.

What works?

A Latin American journalist working in the U.S. characterized the Hispanic community's lack of direction this way: "Hispanics will only succeed when they acquire class consciousness," he said.

The United Farm Workers (UFW), for example, forced collective bargaining on recalcitrant California growers by creating an awareness of exploitation as a class, much in the socio-economic sense meant originally by Marx. When the UFW temporarily turned against equally exploited Mexican undocumented workers in the '70s, adopting a much narrower definition of "class" based on citizenship and residency, the union faced its first major conceptual crisis.

Saul Alinsky-inspired groups have been the most successful at achieving some changes. In Los Angeles, El Paso and San Antonio, groups like UNO, EPISO and COPS have become models of political organization for addressing primarily local socio-economic issues affecting the Hispanic underclass of the U.S. Southwest.

And the Hispanic version of Alinsky, William Velazquez, executive director of the Southwest Voter Registration Project, helped spawn a coalition that in 1984 registered more than 1 million Hispanic voters. Velazquez works on the basis of the interest and consciousness of neighborhoods and communities regarding brass-tacks issues such as schools, social services and jobs.

In Washington, the core group of advocates and researchers from LULAC, MALDEF and the National Council of La Raza work best when they set aside institutional rivalries and the one-upmanship that is the norm. "We all have something to contribute for the community. Among us nobody can lobby like LULAC, litigate like MALDEF or research like La Raza," Torres said.

But for all of these groups' accomplishments, the national leadership shortage remains a pressing problem. Little "class consciousness" has developed among college-educated Hispanics with leadership potential.

One would expect those professionals who aspire to leadership—if they truly intend to represent their community—to identify with the plight of other Hispanics, and not erect a psychological wall separating themselves from the majority. But up to now, many Hispanic leaders have not wanted to be confused with working-class Hispanics, whom they view as "poor unfortunate."

Ernesto Calvo, a psychology professor from Argentina who is a struggling newcomer to the U.S., points to another mechanism at work in the image phenomenon. "Rather than examine where the leaders have failed to communicate a given image, the leaders protect themselves by complaining about the insensitivity of Anglos," he said.

Beyond one-upmanship and careerism, the main problem with most Hispanic leaders is that they are woefully ineffective. As Torres put it, speaking of the new Roybal immigration bill, "I don't think there should be an Hispanic alternative, because I don't think the Hispanic Congress members can shepherd a bill on their own."

Cecilio Morales is associate editor of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs' Washington Report on the Hemisphere.

IN THE WORLD

By Paul Glickman

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

IN JANUARY HONDURAS DEPORTED anti-Sandinista guerrilla leader Steadman Fagoth to the U.S. after he had embarrassed the authorities by holding a press conference earlier that month in downtown Tegucigalpa. *Contra* press conferences have been *verboten* since last summer, when the Honduran military ordered the rebels to keep a lower public profile.

Not only did Fagoth hold the press briefing, but also it was broadcast live on Honduran radio. After his arrest and deportation, he admitted he had "violated the rules

in areas near the Nicaraguan border. Some 18,000 Indian refugees live in camps run by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), while an estimated 5,000 more are in MISURA-controlled territory.

Most refugees in the border camps are MISURA guerrillas or their relatives, according to rebel sources. A Honduran reporter who traveled with MISURA attended a mass at one border camp, where, she said, "there were as many guerrillas as there were refugees."

Forced recruitment.

The UNHCR will give aid only to those refugees who leave the conflictive border

Protecting the refugees from MISURA is even more difficult because of the guerrillas' close collaboration with the Miskito Council of Elders. The village elder is traditionally very important in the Miskito community, but one relief official said the rebels formed the Council of Elders in Honduras to serve "as the administrative arm of MISURA." A well-informed source, who requested anonymity, said the UNHCR no longer considers the Council to be the refugees' representative, because of its ties to the guerrillas.

A U.S. official familiar with refugee issues questioned the UN's statistics on forced recruitment. He said on at least one occasion, two Indians were recruiting with-

Elders that people who go back are used for propaganda purposes by the Sandinistas." He said the scope of the problem had been exaggerated, and claimed that there are more Salvadoran refugees in southern Honduras who want to repatriate than Miskitos. While the U.S. has vigorously lobbied for the relocation and now the repatriation of the Salvadorans, it has kept its distance from the question of Miskito repatriation.

"The U.S. military made it clear it wouldn't fight repatriation," said a relief official, "but they made it clear they wouldn't give any help, either."

Miskito relocation.

The Miskito refugees in Honduras left Nicaragua because of the generalized warfare, because the Sandinistas destroyed their villages during a resettlement campaign or because they were kidnapped by MISURA.

In early 1982 Nicaragua undertook to relocate thousands of Indians living in villages and hamlets vulnerable to MISURA attack. Many Miskitos resisted the move, and the Americas Watch human rights group has reported that the Sandinistas burned down homes and crops and killed livestock to force the Indians to resettle.

Thousands of Miskitos were moved to resettlement towns, called "concentration camps" by MISURA. A rebel attack on one such settlement demonstrated how MISURA swells its ranks and the ranks of the refugees.

Steadman Fagoth announced last summer that MISURA had attacked the "concentration camp" of Columbus on July 12, "liberating" dozens of Miskitos. A well-informed relief official said, however, that the 52 Indians "liberated" from Columbus were actually forced to leave with MISURA. Twenty-four escaped en route to Honduras and the remaining 28 were brought to Rus Rus, the site of a main MISURA base in Honduras. Twelve escaped to a nearby village, where they contacted relief workers and said they wanted to go back to Nicaragua.

The refugees were transferred to the UN camp at Mocorron, where MISURA caught up to them. The rebels kidnapped four of the refugees, holding them prisoner in the local Council of Elders house. The relief official said Steadman Fagoth himself came in the night and told the Indians they were free to leave Honduras, but that MISURA would kill them inside Nicaragua. Using Honduran soldiers as backup, relief officials rescued three of the Miskitos held in the Council house. They remained adamant about repatriating and eventually were flown back to Nicaragua.

The other nine refugees abruptly changed their minds about leaving, saying they had found relatives in Mocorron and decided to stay. The relief official believed MISURA had threatened these refugees as well.

MISURA is able to impose its will in the Mosquitia because of a "tacit agreement" with the Honduran military, said the U.S. official. Under this arrangement, the guerrillas are allowed to maintain their bases and hospitals scattered throughout a strip about 10 miles wide and 100 miles long, running along the northeast border with Nicaragua.

Honduras endeavors to keep MISURA out of sight, out of mind. If the rebels travel outside their zone of control, the Honduran military only gets concerned if they move around armed.

"If they wander around in civilian clothes," said the U.S. official, "it's recognized that nobody's going to care too much." In the border area, Honduran soldiers even go on patrol with the guerrillas, "to keep track of what they're doing." Only in extreme cases, such as the kidnapping of refugees, is the military forced to restrict MISURA's activities.

The Honduran government's affinity for MISURA's cause means life will continue to be difficult for the Nicaraguan refugees. "The Hondurans won't say it publicly," the official commented, "but they feel MISURA is fighting a battle for Honduras."

Paul Glickman is a journalist based in Honduras.



HONDURAS

MISURA forced recruitment steps up in the border region

of the game."

Migration Director Col. Miguel Flores Auca said Fagoth broke a law prohibiting foreigners from engaging in politics while in the country. He proclaimed that the government would expel anyone "who compromises the neutrality of Honduras."

Flores Auca's words notwithstanding, Fagoth's deportation was an isolated incident rather than the beginning of a general crackdown on *contras*. Both Fagoth's MISURA guerrillas and the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, the largest *contra* army, have used Honduras as a base since 1982. Honduras has allowed the rebels to establish their bases in the country, and has also provided them with arms and supplies for the war against Nicaragua.

Officially, Honduras is neutral in the war to overthrow the Sandinistas, and it has never admitted the presence of *contra* bases. Officials of refugee relief agencies say MISURA exploits this situation. With the government looking the other way, the guerrillas engage in forced recruitment of Nicaraguan refugees, and also threaten and even kidnap many who want to repatriate.

MISURA is made up of Miskito, Sumo and Rama Indians, and commands anywhere from less than 1,000 to 2,500 troops, based on varying estimates. The rebels are based in Honduras' Mosquitia, a vast, isolated region of pine forests and tropical jungle. Their operations are concentrated

area and move inland to UN camps. An official of World Relief, a private agency that contracts with the UN to run the camps, charged that MISURA has carried out a campaign of forced recruitment almost from the time Miskito refugees began arriving in Honduras in 1982.

The UNHCR began documenting cases of forced recruitment in the last three months of 1983. The World Relief official said there were more than 200 incidents of

out either MISURA's or the Council of Elder's consent. "There are a lot of currents that are labeled MISURA that don't necessarily agree with Steadman," said the official.

Relief officials also accuse MISURA of using coercion against refugees who want to return to Nicaragua. While World Relief is working with the Sandinistas to establish mechanisms to facilitate repatriation, refugees have told of being kidnapped and

Relief officials accuse MISURA of using coercion against refugees who want to return to Nicaragua. They threaten them with kidnapping and death.

attempted or actual recruitment by force during that time. While this activity tapered off somewhat in 1984, the official estimated there were another 150 instances of forced recruitment last year.

"They threaten a person's family, tear up their ration cards and generally harass them," said the official. He said MISURA members sometimes enter the camps carrying weapons, and that there are probably more incidents of forced recruitment that go unreported due to intimidation. "We believe this is the tip of the iceberg," he said.

threatened with death if they left Honduras.

On various occasions relief officials have had to call on the Honduran military to force the rebels to release refugees in their custody. A senior relief official said many Miskitos are now too intimidated to say they want to repatriate. The UNHCR said 59 refugees returned to Nicaragua in 1984, but the relief official said there are at least 600 to 700 more who want to go back who have been frightened into silence.

The U.S. refugee expert said, "There is a fear among MISURA and the Council of

By Bruce Cumings

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

A DELEGATION OF AMERICANS accompanied democratic dissident Kim Dae Jung back to his homeland in early February, and got perhaps more than they bargained for: Korean politics as usual.

As this group of Congress members, foundation heads, former Carter administration officials and assorted liberals and human rights activists piled off a 747 jumbo into Kimp'o Airport, moving like an amoeba amid an amazing media hullabaloo of reporters, TV cameras and photographers, they were suddenly treated as if they were the Korean opposition. Two phalanxes of thugs, thick-necked karate experts in civilian clothes, with no identifying insignia and no intention of explaining themselves, barged into the delegation. I had seen such people many times in the streets of Seoul, roughing up the opposition or beating students. Now we got the same.

The first barrage separated the majority of the delegation, about 20 people, from Kim and a small group that included the leaders of the delegation, former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White and Rep. Edward Feighan (D-OH). I was precisely at the point where the separation occurred. Next to me was Lance Lindblom, head of the MacArthur Foundation, who was punched and slapped. Next to him was Margerie Tabankin, head of Vista under Carter, who was slugged in the ribs. All of us were held by the thugs for about 20 minutes in a narrow jetway. They neither identified nor explained themselves.

The second assault occurred as Kim and his wife continued down the jetway. The plainclothesmen threw Rep. Thomas Foglietta (D-PA) to the floor, kicked the slats from under Ambassador White, punched and kicked Pat Derian, bodily removed Feighan from the vicinity of Kim, and separated the shoulder of one of Kim's bodyguards, a Korean-American U.S. citizen.

Kim was thrown into an elevator, along with his wife, who has bad arthritis and was caught just as she was about to hit the floor. As this happened, I thought to myself that I might hear a shot ring out. It was all too similar to what happened to Benigno Aquino at the Manila airport in the Philippines. For several hours none of us knew what had happened to Kim.

Another assault.

Thus were we welcomed to the Republic of Korea. One can imagine the outcry if this had been the Soviets, separating a returning dissident from a supportive American group. Indeed, there was an outcry in the press, since most of what I have described was caught on camera. Little did we know, however, that another assault would come within two days: the Reagan administration, and U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Richard Walker, would accuse us of provoking the attack. To get to the bottom of this self-serving lie requires some explanation.

Walker was the first prominent American to meet with Chun Doo Hwan just weeks after he had shot his way into office over the bodies of at least 1,000 of his fellow citizens. This was the summer of 1980, and Walker no doubt wanted to let Chun know that the Reagan people, after the election, would treat his type with the respect military dictators merit from the administration, and shun Jimmy Carter's weak-kneed human rights policies. (Carter, of course, had also done nothing to oppose Chun's rise to power.)

Walker is, in effect, an appointee of Jesse Helms, and was one of 22 ambassadors to publicly support his re-election. Shortly after arriving in Korea, he disparaged student demonstrators. And as one of those Reaganites not afflicted with foreign service professionalism or political qualms, he has given every manner of support to the Chun dictatorship.

When we met with him shortly after the airport fracas, his diffidence, distraction, lack of feeling and generally cavalier at-



South Korean democratic dissident Kim Dae Jung was greeted by a massive sea of humanity stretched for a couple of miles upon return to his native country.

SOUTH KOREA

The real story behind Kim Dae Jung's return

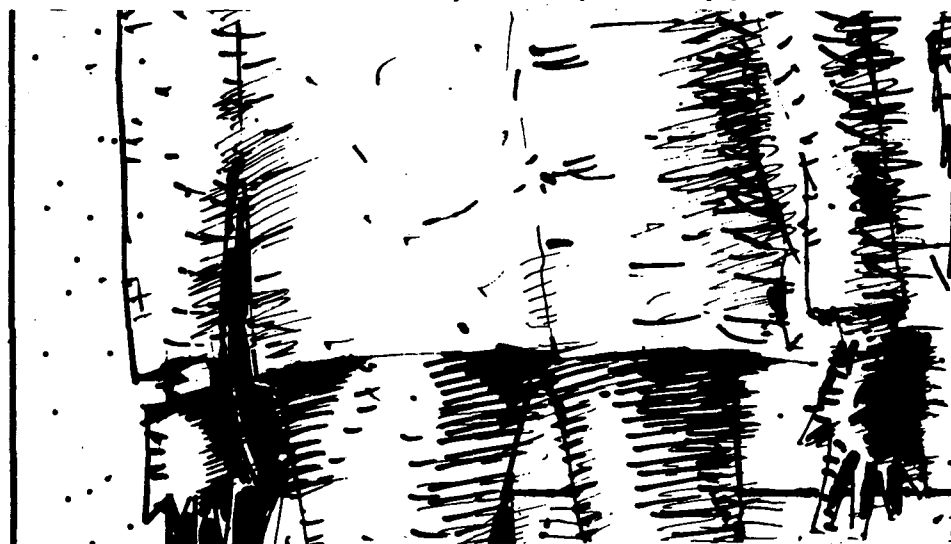
titude upset everyone in the delegation. Indeed, in the middle of our meeting, a Korean-American flopped into a chair in the back of the room, suffering from what turned out to be a mild stroke after having been beaten by guards near Kim's home. Ambassador Walker seemed unfazed by this episode, no doubt because it is daily fare for this regime—a regime he so identifies with that he used the plural “we” several times to refer to the Chun government, until it was pointed out to him that he represented Washington, not Seoul.

Why were we accused of provocation? This was, in essence, what the Chinese call a reversal of correct verdicts, an entirely political charade that had the virtue of abruptly halting a situation that, for another administration, might have led to strains in relations with our wonderful Korean ally

Chun, however, can get away with sending his thugs to pummel Americans, as long as it's on the Reagan/Walker watch.

He can also do it under the nose of the *New York Times* and get away with it. Clyde Haberman, the *Times*' Tokyo/Seoul correspondent, was with our delegation during most of the visit and had ample opportunity to question people about the airport fracas. Yet when Walker gave him an exclusive interview on February 10 (Seoul time) in order to accuse us of provocation, Haberman came back to the delegation again, asking questions as if he had just arrived, weighing the self-serving fabrications of Walker against eyewitness testimony by people having nothing to hide.

The next day Walker's reversal of verdicts was the *Times*' lead story, and on Tuesday the newspaper ran as fact, not



IN THESE TIMES FEB. 27-MARCH 12, 1985 9 editorial, the judgment that the episode began when the delegation locked arms as they exited from the planes. This had provoked the security men who, presumably, felt threatened by the action (which never happened).

The rising tide of opposition.

Our airport reception placed the Chun regime in a bath of worldwide publicity, prompting a characteristic outburst. We were called “beancurd,” “of effeminate structure,” because we didn't take the assault quietly. But the fracas overshadowed a more important story: the eruption of the first viable opposition since Chun's coup.

When the delegation left the airport, a massive sea of humanity stretched for a couple of miles along our route into the city. Estimated at 100,000 to 150,000, this crowd of Kim's supporters had been kept from entering the airport by 7,000 riot police. As they waved Kim's banners and pictures and cheered for us, “order” was kept by thousands of police irregulars wearing green uniforms and thick helmets with masks in front and leather protective scabbards in back.

In the days preceding Kim's return, large crowds in the tens of thousands had also turned out to hear opposition candidates who were campaigning in closely controlled national assembly elections, rigged in advance to assure ruling party dominance. Approximately 200 street demonstrators were arrested two days before our arrival, and upward of 250 oppositionists suddenly found themselves confined to their homes.

Since 1980 there has been no real opposition to the Chun regime, apart from courageous students who have mounted ever-larger demonstrations in recent months (6,000 riot police subdued demonstrations at Seoul National University in November 1984). The nominal opposition parties are controlled and often bankrolled by the regime, while major opposition figures had their civil rights proscribed until recently (Kim Dae Jung and 14 others are still proscribed from political participation).

In anticipation of Kim's return, opposition leaders founded the New Korea Democratic Party, which proceeded to win 29 percent of the vote to the ruling party's 35 percent. In urban areas the vote was overwhelmingly Democratic.

This swelling opposition is precisely the reason Reagan officials sought to dissuade Kim from returning to Korea, which they did in various ways the past several months. They view him as a “destabilizing” force, and worry that he might not be sufficiently anti-North Korea, anti-unification and pro-multinational corporation to suit American tastes. Yet Undersecretary of State Elliot Abrams, who had jeopardized Kim's life by asserting that a North Korean might assassinate him so as to cause a crisis (thereby declaring open season on Kim by anyone with a reason to want him dead), still had the gall to call the national assembly elections a victory for “quiet diplomacy.” They were in fact a victory for Korean democrats, who have gotten the back of the hand from Washington since 1980.

A close reading of Abrams' annual human rights report gets at the real problem in South Korea. It is forced to acknowledge the continuing illegitimacy of the regime. Chun has little support at home, and so Reagan will again invite him to the White House in April, as he did as his first foreign policy act in 1981, to bolster Chun from abroad. Reagan might ask Chun if he'd stand for a free election. The answer would be: no.

In the '60s, Park Chung Hee was able to hold reasonably free elections because the ruling party was adept at mobilizing votes in the countryside. Village elders would group peasants together, give them some bonus cash and tell them whom to vote for. The urban areas always went for the opposition. By 1971, however, when Kim Dae Jung got 40 percent of the national vote in spite of regime manipulation (including \$3 million in campaign funds for Park from Gulf Oil Corporation), such elections seemed too threatening. No free elections

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Auto

Continued from page 3

tic auto employment that can be absorbed through attrition to avoid massive dislocation. Also, he would implicitly control wages and prices by raising the import quota if either prices or wages exceeded a preset limit.

If such indirect controls were not effective, there could also be explicit quid pro quo conditions established: guaranteed levels of investment, commitment to small car production and other goals as a corollary to such protection. GM may not care greatly whether it builds cars in Korea or Michigan, but American citizens—who are hurt as workers and taxpayers by any drastic decline in the auto industry—should care. Yet if they are to pay a price as consumers, they should have some control by way of their government over the use of this indirect "tax."

Since the U.S. is unlikely to be the low-cost producer for very long in most fields, Luria argues that the administration strategy of reducing trade deficits by lowering barriers elsewhere will produce only modest gains. Even the companies that have long been competitive exporters are now being crushed by the overvaluation of the dollar, which Rosen estimates at 30 to 50 percent, depending on the currency and trade good. That makes U.S. products uncompetitive even when production costs are low.

That is why even conservative senators like Richard Lugar, the new head of the foreign relations committee, and John Danforth, both Midwest Republicans, are considering proposals to apply a 20 percent surcharge to all imports (shades of Nixon's 1971 new economic policy). Motorola has been joined by other exporting firms in pushing such a surcharge, which would gradually wind down as budget and trade deficits simultaneously decline.

Despite its tempting simplicity, the idea has problems: if Latin American countries were not exempted, they might threaten debt default (or simply go under); if Europe were not exempted, there could be a backlash against U.S. missiles. That could leave Japan as the only target. In any case, the fragile international economy has been nourished in large part through exports to the U.S. If the domestic economy strengthens at the expense of other countries, the dollar will rise in value, undercutting exports further. Also, the issue is not just the trade deficit but the structure of the economy. As Luria argues, creating Florida boomtowns from increasing citrus exports to Japan does not address joblessness in Flint or Pittsburgh.

Yet there seems to be no easy way to reduce the dollar's value. Rosen argues that if the federal deficit stays high, foreign investment will flow here for the high interest rates. If the deficit is reduced, the money will come because of a revitalized, growing economy.

But a steady reordering of the domestic economy is a necessary first step. That would include at a minimum reduced deficits, less military spending, eased transition of modernizing industries, and a combination of policies to reduce worktime and create new jobs, especially in areas of high unemployment. Also, as Rosen and others argue, a coordinated effort by the major central banks to sell dollars and buy other currencies could gradually reduce the dollar's overvaluation. Such a group effort could avoid a panicked flight from the dollar and a precipitous crash.

The failure of the marketplace to smoothly, fairly and efficiently order economic affairs is becoming more apparent. But the free marketeers prescribe only more of the same, seeing dreaded danger in any attempt to regulate that market. It's like the doctor treating a patient who has contracted a bad cold after overexposure to the elements by recommending a series of icy baths. If he survives, it will be in spite of the prescription. ■

Korea

Continued from page 9

tion has been held since.

The reasons for the change are sociological. In the '60s upward of 70 percent of the population was rural. Today it is almost the exact reverse. Because the ruling party and the regime have less chance to manipulate voting in the cities, there can be no voting. Chun, therefore, will not hold free elections and neither will any successor associated with his regime.

Repression in Seoul.

My deepest impression from my recent visit was not the airport fracas, or even the broad opposition to Chun. It was the stunning suppressive capacities of this regime, which surely is among the worst in the world. We had full itineraries each day in Seoul, visiting opposition and government leaders, church activists, labor leaders, students dissidents. Everywhere we went agents would follow, recording every word that was said. Even in meetings inside our international hotel, we twice discovered agents in ante rooms taking notes on what we said. One American had kept a careful record of everything we did on his tape recorder. Agents entered his room when he was out and erased all his tapes. And we were Americans. Koreans, or Korean-American citizens have no dispensation from a truly thorough repression.

In many talks with Korean oppositionists, ministers and labor leaders it was emphasized that anyone, absolutely anyone, who is politically active in opposition to the regime is subject to harassment, intimidation, arrest and torture. In a church in a poor area of Seoul, one long noted for its human rights struggle, a woman told me of a man arrested last fall who had every tooth in his head knocked out by the police.

In meetings with families of political prisoners, gruesome tortures were outlined,

the pain showing on the faces of relatives. These were dirt-poor people who have difficulty holding jobs because their relatives are political cases, and who are ostracized by fearful neighbors. As a matter of fact, Kim Dae Jung's own brother is jobless. He said any company that would employ him would immediately run afoul of the regime.

We met three young labor organizers from the Daewoo automobile factory, a joint venture with General Motors. They had been released from jail that morning and detailed the terrors facing anyone trying to organize labor apart from corporatist regime controls and company unions. The prisons they had come from had no heat, terrible food and, of course, they had seen no lawyers.

It's no excuse to say that the majority of citizens do not feel the repression, but go about their business. That is true in any dictatorship, and this one, in particular, has manifold ways of telling citizens to do nothing other than "go about their business." The fact remains that anyone who actively opposes the Chun regime places his or her life and livelihood in jeopardy.

After 40 years of oppressive regimes in Seoul, what do the American people owe to the rulers of South Korea? Do we owe them 40,000 American soldiers, still in occupation of that turf where North confronts South, armed with about 250 nuclear weapons? Do we owe this regime access to our markets, so that goods produced by cheap, non-unionized labor flood in? Do we owe Chun yet another visit to Washington?

We owe the South Korean rulers nothing, and all concerned citizens should oppose the upcoming Chun visit. We do owe the South Korean people something, however: support for human rights and democratization, in such short supply in the current administration, as it was in the last two years of the Carter administration. ■

*Bruce Cumings is author of **The Origins of the Korean War** and is an associate professor of International Studies at the University of Washington.*

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By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

FORTY YEARS AFTER THE END OF World War II, the anniversary of the Yalta conference is generating more commentary than the end of the war itself. Talk of "overcoming Yalta" is far from clear, because Yalta means different things to different people, and proposed alternatives are diverse and contradictory.

This discussion is usually described as symptomatic of growing dissatisfaction in Europe with the post-war order of Europe, which, according to legend, was decided over the heads of the peoples concerned at the February 1945 meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin in the Crimea. Sections of the European peace movement identify the bloc system stemming from Yalta as the root of the nuclear arms race threatening to destroy their continent.

But American policy is also stimulating this debate. For some time the U.S. has been sending signals to its European allies that it means to shift its forces toward the Pacific. This prospect sends European leaders scurrying to figure out a new power equation for Europe.

At the time it took place, the Yalta conference was described by the Nazis as a cynical abandonment of Eastern Europe to Communist tyranny. The Berlin *Morgenpost* headlined on Feb. 15, 1945: "Roosevelt and Churchill have given Bolshevism full powers for the enslavement of Europe" (see graphic). This interpretation was subsequently imported into the U.S. with considerable vehemence by Eastern European emigrés, some of them former Nazi sympathizers. The result was an American right-wing variant that attributed the Yalta "sell-out" to insidious Communist influence over Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The French, on the other hand, have tended to interpret "Yalta" as a cynical deal between Stalin and the "Anglo-Saxons" dividing Europe into spheres of influence, or "blocs."

Current scholarship rejects earlier simple views that cast blame for the division of Europe on either Soviet expansionism or American imperialism. Historian Wilfried Loth's 1980 book *Die Teilung der Welt* ("The Division of the World") suggests FDR had a personal vision and strategy too sophisticated for American leaders to grasp or carry on after he died. Its double nature was embodied in the United Nations (UN) organization, combining Wilsonian world government principles in the General Assembly with the power principle of "world policemen" in the Security Council, where the "big four" (U.S., Britain, USSR and China, with France later on) were supposed to keep the peace.

The creation of the UN was announced at Yalta on Feb. 11, 1945. But the post-war division of Europe was not decided there. The division was the result of the war, of pre-war history, of conflicting interests and ideologies of the U.S. and the USSR, aggravated by suspicion and misunderstanding.

"For those of us who were fighting in the mountains," says former Yugoslav partisan Mihailo Markovic, "there was nothing wrong with Yalta. But there was something very wrong with Oct. 9, 1944." That is the day when Churchill exchanged notes with Stalin roughly dividing Eastern Europe and the Balkans into spheres of influence. "FDR never accepted that, and at Yalta there was not a word about spheres of influence."

"Spheres of influence" was indeed the old-fashioned European approach. But Roosevelt had a grander vision of a "free world" in which spheres of influence gave way to a worldwide free market. To outsiders, this may look like nothing but a gigantic sphere of influence, but to American leaders, convinced of the moral virtues of free enterprise, it is almost the opposite. A major American war aim was to break up the British and other European colonial empires and unify the world economy around the dollar. To a very large extent this was accomplished.

What was not foreseen was the extent of

the world policing role, which the U.S. is trying to get its allies to share in the absence of the Security Council policing function envisaged by FDR. Thus the U.S. seems to be moving toward at least partial withdrawal of its occupation forces from West Germany. Of the policy proposals stirred up by this prospect, perhaps the most significant is the one by Zbigniew Brzezinski in *Foreign Affairs* and the *New York Times* last December.

Brzezinski's five-point plan.

Declaring that a wider Europe can emerge only from a "subtly induced process of change that can neither be quickly detected nor easily resisted," Brzezinski presented a five-point strategy for overcoming the partition of Europe, summarized as follows:

- The West should repudiate, not the Yalta agreement, "but its historic legacy: the partition of Europe."

- The West "should reconfirm its commitment to the Helsinki Final Act formalizing the existing territorial status quo and making human rights a legitimate international concern." Political systems, but not boundaries, should be challenged. In other words, no support for German claims to the formerly German Western parts of Poland. This is necessary to weaken Polish dependence on Russian protection from eventual German attempts to recover lost territories.

- Western Europe should create opportunities for "Eastern European participation in various all-European institutions, private and public."

- Western Europe should intensify its aid to East Europeans struggling for the political emancipation of Eastern Europe.

- What must be changed is "an American military presence that reduces the incentive for the Europeans to unite politically, yet simultaneously increases the incentive for the Russians to stay put militarily in Central and Eastern Europe." Brzezinski concluded that "America should particularly encourage efforts at increased French-German military cooperation and eventual integration."

Although he is outside the present administration, Brzezinski's suggestions are significant because they are in fact being put into practice, more or less.

President Francois Mitterrand believes the only way to overcome Yalta is to unite Europe, wrote Henri de Kergolay in the conservative daily *Figaro* on February 4. "One of the first tasks of that politically united Western Europe would be to emphasize the right of European peoples to

to advance the reunification process."

French foreign policy under Mitterrand has been directed toward firmly anchoring West Germany to France and the Atlantic Alliance. The policy requires a Western European arms buildup, with discreet integration of German conventional strength with French nuclear forces. Thus, if as expected France decides at the end of this year to manufacture the neutron bomb, the French Rapid Action Force could carry nuclear weapons to the forward German battlefield even in the absence of Americans.

One dubious assumption in Brzezinski's strategy is that a European superpower would be "less at conflict with the Soviet Union than a Europe hosting a large American army." This may seem plausible today,

but the Russians have always been more afraid of a strong Germany than of the Americans.

Moreover, some American agencies might be less restrained in encouraging uprisings in Eastern Europe if such a conflict risked involving only European armed forces.

This poses a new set of complicated problems to Western peace movements. The failure to stop cruise and Pershing missile deployment naturally incited much of the European peace movement to reflect upon and then correct more fundamental causes. On the anniversary of the Yalta conference, 200 people, including leaders of the British and Dutch peace and political exiles from several Eastern European countries, met in West Berlin to discuss "Peace in Divided Europe." Viewpoints and analyses were widely divergent. Even so, a surprising degree of agreement emerged for a demilitarized zone in Central Europe.

Several speakers objected to portraying Eastern Europeans as only helpless victims. The Czech Karel Bartosek recalled that Europe was divided long before Yalta. The '40s, he said, brought the end of a certain Central Europe formed through the centuries, when Jews and Germans who had settled there and brought their culture were eliminated, opening the way to Russian hegemony.

Carlos de Sa Rego warned against the assumption that if the superpowers went away, Europe would be all sweetness and light. Yalta prevents the tensions that exist in Europe from expressing themselves clearly, he said.

Sa Rego refers to Eastern Europeans as "orphans of empire," still nostalgic for the Austro-Hungarian empire out of which most of the existing states were carved at the end of World War I. That arrangement was a triumph of French policy, which had encouraged Eastern European nationalisms in order to weaken German-Austrian influence. The loss of empire exacerbated German nationalism and anti-Semitism in Austria, which produced Hitler. France and Britain proved unable to defend the Eastern European states that, anyway, mostly succumbed to fascism and virulent anti-Semitism before the Nazis came their way. Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, as well as Slovakia and Croatia (detached from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia), were all allied to Nazi Germany against the USSR. After the war, the Russians were determined not to let such a German-dominated alliance build up against them again.

By their appeals to the West, many Eastern Europeans convey the impression that they are indeed "orphans of empire" who feel that they have been incorporated in the wrong empire. What expresses itself as anti-Communism is surely in large part national feeling against the Russians. The Russians do not have the cultural prestige

to dominate successfully peoples who belonged to the Austro-Hungarian empire.

If they are longing for another empire, which shall it be? The questioning of "Yalta" in the East inevitably awakens old rivalries in Western Europe. The French are sniffing the air for signs of nostalgia in Eastern Europe for the Austro-Hungarian empire. To them, a "neutralized" zone through Central Europe sounds like nothing so much as a revival of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Add Germany to it and the monster would be even worse: Germans would dominate the continent.

It could happen. Many Czechs, abandoned by France and Britain at Munich, sick and tired of the Russians, are wishing they had the Germans back, now that they seem so peaceful. German culture, German

EUROPE

Yalta reconsidered forty years after

competence and German exports are increasingly welcome in Eastern Europe. This prospect is probably the main, unspoken reason for fastening West Germany so tightly to NATO and the French *force de frappe*.

In Eastern Europe, only Poland seems to yearn to belong, not to a German-dominated Central Europe but to the West, to the Pope and to the U.S. At Berlin, a Polish professor acknowledged that it was difficult in Poland to criticize three men: Reagan, the Pope and Pilsudski (patriot and military dictator, who died in 1935). "We have a very narrow space for rational dialog," he said. "You have to be a little bit irrational to keep in touch with the people. The number of people who believe in miracles and think Solidarity was one of them is very great." This exceptionally rational Pole had a policy suggestion: he wants the International Monetary Fund to run the Polish economy. This, he believes, will raise the standard of living in Poland, allowing greater space for political opposition to develop.

Poland is a special case in the Yalta discussion. Although there was no agreement at Yalta to divide Europe, there was an agreement to change the borders of Poland. Because they could do nothing about it (the Red Army was already far advanced into Central Europe, while the Western allies were in difficulty in the Ardennes), FDR and Churchill reluctantly accepted moving Poland's eastern frontier westward to the advantage of the USSR. Poland was compensated by having its western border moved farther west to incorporate German territories, whose German populations were expelled.

Thus Polish patriots have a special grudge against Yalta. They protest bitterly that Britain entered the war precisely to defend Poland, whose territory had been expanded considerably at the end of World War I at the expense of Germany and Russia, from German and Russian armies who were taking some of that territory back. Yet at the end of the war, Britain let one of Poland's aggressors, Russia, keep the territory it won—not to mention allowing Russia to control the Polish government.

One reason the French harp on their objections to Yalta is to remind the Poles that their French friend, at least, was not at Yalta and had nothing to do with the deal.

Most of the German left is uneasy at criticism of Yalta. This is often interpreted as pro-Soviet sympathy. More than that, it is a fear that stigmatization of Yalta will allow a resurgent nationalist German right to pop up saying, "We told you so." Indeed, at the time the Nazi press said Yalta proved the hypocrisy of Britain's defense of Poland. And in Germany, "Yalta" also means the westward displacement of Poland that cost Germany territories its expellees, 40 years later, are still claiming.



Berlin *MORGENPOST*, Feb. 15, 1945

self-determination. In this, it would only be remaining loyal to the Yalta agreements." De Kergolay acknowledged that insisting on the right to self-determination involves raising the problem of German unity. But in the framework of a united Europe, it is raised in the least unfavorable way. "A rapprochement between the two Germanies with a Federal Republic integrated and fastened into the West reduces the risks of seeing West Germany give in to neutralist or pacifist temptations to try

PHOTOGRAPH BY LIONEL DELEVINGNE

BOSTON

IN THE EAGLE ROOM ADJACENT TO THE mayor's office in Boston City Hall, politicians, businesspeople and journalists were gathered to watch President Reagan's State of the Union address, at the invitation of Mayor Ray Flynn. The occasion was a perfect platform for Flynn's current local and national crusades: calling attention to Boston's fiscal crisis, and the plight of the urban poor and working class around the country.

As the strains of Congress' cloying "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" faded and Flynn walked to the front of the room, his guests burst into a round of "Happy Anniversary, Mr. Mayor," for it happened also to be Flynn's 20th wedding anniversary. It wasn't the first time the evening had provided a Flynn-Reagan parallel. Reagan's claims on "faith, freedom, family, work and neighborhood," could have come out of the popular mayor's own State of the City address the month before.

Though politically they are polar oppo-

sites, both share tremendous personal appeal, beyond the quicksilver of charisma, and at times that appeal intersects. It was a truism of last November's election that in the populist Democratic mayor's political base—conservative Irish Catholic South Boston—many would be pulling the lever for Ronald Reagan.

But while Reagan's populist image is mostly fabrication—he turned in his humble Midwestern credentials to become an actor, then a flack for General Electric and Sunbelt Republicanism—Flynn is the

genuine article. His personal background has become Boston political hagiography—the son of a longshoreman and a housemaid, Providence College basketball star (drafted by the Celtics but soon cut), he gained prominence as an anti-busing state representative from South Boston. But he stayed mostly apart from the racism and right-wing posturing that infected the busing conflict, and as city council member went on to develop a populist politics that integrated his anti-busing past with support for tenants' rights, restrictions on real estate

The First F



development and neighborhood-based planning, all under the rubric of community control.

Now, one year into his first term, most observers point to improved race relations as his most significant political achievement—a striking accomplishment not only given his anti-busing background, but also last year's racially divided mayoral race, in which his opponent, black socialist Mel King, got 98 percent of the black vote. There have been some substantive improvements for Boston blacks under Flynn, most

notably in the distribution of city services. Police protection in black neighborhoods has improved, and last year he sent snowplows into areas of the city that hadn't seen them in years. He has also appointed blacks as commissioners of public housing, parks and corrections and as city treasurer.

But mostly, the perceived change in race relations is attributed to Flynn's personal style. He was fast on the scene last year when a black family's apartment was vandalized in a racial incident, scolding white kids in the neighborhood for allowing the

event to occur. He personally delivered an \$843,000 city settlement to the widow of a black hospital worker shot by police nine years ago—Mayor Kevin White had refused to pay the damages. Last summer, when black and white teenagers were clashing in Field's Corner, Flynn organized basketball games and made the kids play on interracial teams. He's been known to stop at courts in black neighborhoods for impromptu pick-up games himself.

Such gestures keep the hagiographers busy, and irritate the skeptics. "It's interesting that it comes down to some belief that his 'personal style' has made the difference," says King. "It ignores the work that a lot of other people have done, a lot of organizing." Yet there's more than grandstanding or myth-making in Flynn's flair for the symbolic act. He has a recognizably Catholic belief in the power to influence others by setting a good example, whether that involves taking in a black family that has no heat, eating Thanksgiving dinner at a homeless shelter or shoveling the sidewalks behind City Hall. And his personal style grabs attention because he is a symbol himself, a self-aware one, of the politics he is trying to advance. His posture seems to say, if this South Boston Irish Catholic could transcend poverty, outgrow racism and come to the conclusion that poor and working people, whatever their race, have more in common than divides them—a favorite Flynn theme—then anyone can, and the result would transform Boston politics beyond measure.

But in the meantime he must represent the interests of the diverse coalition that made him mayor, against the forces that didn't—downtown real estate developers and their political allies, state industry, the legislature, even the Reagan administration. His record so far illustrates the limits as well as the strength of the politics of personal decency.

Flynn's self-stated priority upon election was restoring city services to Boston neighborhoods, which had been neglected by the downtown focus of the White administration. But given the financial situation he inherited, that has amounted to fairly distributing scarcity. Most of the administration's energy this year is going toward covering a projected \$50 million deficit.

Flynn's 1985 agenda is topped by a revenue package before the state legislature that would allow the city to impose parking, hotel/motel and entertainment taxes, levies that would hit city visitors and consumers. Boston's financial straits are created by its peculiar revenue situation. The city gets 98 percent of its revenue from property taxes, which by contrast provide less than half the revenue base of other major cities. Because the city is home to many universities, state and federal government buildings and historic sites, more than half the property is tax exempt. The vise was tightened by Massachusetts' 1980 Proposition 2 1/2, which capped property tax increases.

The legislature has kept Boston on a short fiscal leash since the days of the city machine of Mayor James Curley, and the statehouse skepticism didn't lessen with his wheeling-dealing successors, including White. Extreme fiscal crises have been handled by state bailouts, but Flynn's proposal is to "fix the boat" with structural revenue reform.

His strategy has been to convince the state that the city's dire fiscal straits are not the result of profligacy. That effort at times has conflicted with campaign promises. He has continued to close schools and lay off city workers, and his campaign to increase police foot patrols has been fought because it doesn't provide for hiring additional officers, just taking some out of cruisers. And black leaders have criticized him for failing to follow through on a promise to reopen a closed police station in Mattapan.

But Flynn is taking his campaign around the state, trying to convince legislators and their constituencies that Boston's financial crisis is real and that helping the city is

worth paying more to see a Celtics game. Here, too, his considerable personal appeal is an asset. And so, perversely, is the proposed federal budget, which could cost Boston \$100 million in federal aid. Last year the city got close to \$40 million in block and community development grants, and of the \$18 million it received in revenue sharing, \$17 million went to public safety.

Yet Flynn is up against the tax cutting tenor of the times, which has smitten even Gov. Michael Dukakis. Dukakis' 1978 loss to Edward King was blamed heavily on his veto of a property tax cut passed by the legislature, and he's learned his lesson. Now he's proposing state tax cuts, which rankles Flynn, given Boston's revenue straits, and has yet to endorse the city's tax proposals.

The safe bet seems to be that Flynn "will get something, but he won't get it all" from the legislature, in the words of one state representative. Administrative Services Director Ray Dooley, Flynn's campaign manager and a close advisor, sees a "growing consensus" for the revenue package, and notes its importance to the rest of the mayor's agenda: "We've raised expectations, because the mayor believes people have the right to expect certain things from city hall. But these fiscal constraints are making it difficult to meet those expectations."

If Boston's tax base makes its revenue picture grimmer than other cities, the real estate boom that exploded in the late '70s brightens it a little. Massachusetts is on the cutting edge of the nation's transition to a high-technology, service economy and the effects have mostly been positive. State unemployment is around 4 percent, and in Boston some 70,000 jobs will be created by 1990, but only 900 in manufacturing.

Service sector expansion has meant rising demand for office space in Boston, and under the White administration most of it sprang up downtown. Community groups pressured the city to attach strings to development, and in White's waning days as mayor the city adopted a policy of linkage, requiring large commercial builders to pay into a housing development fund. Under Flynn, the city has kept the same formula—\$5 per square foot paid over 12 years for commercial developments over 100,000 square feet. Though some in and out of city government would like to see a higher figure, the consensus among city planners is that the formula is a base. "We have developers competing with each other by offering extra linkage," says Housing Advisor Peter Dreier.

The city would like to expand the concept of linkage to win other concessions from developers, especially jobs for city residents. Boston has a pre-Flynn jobs ordinance requiring that a portion of construction work go to city residents, with a percentage to women and minorities. Under Flynn, pacts with New England Life and the owners of Copley Place have won permanent jobs for city residents—albeit entry-level, low-wage ones—and the city is committed to continuing the trend.

"We control the land, and can use it as leverage to gain a negotiating role for the community in this thriving economy," says Neil Sullivan, director of constituent services and a close Flynn advisor. Sullivan sees development agreements going beyond housing and jobs to include equity for neighborhoods in commercial projects. Right now Redevelopment Agency officials are drawing up a development package for Boston's Southwest Corridor, an impoverished section of mostly black Roxbury, that Sullivan would like to see include an equity position for the neighborhood.

Sullivan, Dreier and others on the Flynn administration's left wing see the city's current development strategy as a way gradually to increase public control over the private sector. "Economic participation for city residents comes first with us," says Sullivan, a veteran Massachusetts Fair Share organizer. "We're used to pushing economic justice and income redistribution through legislation at the federal and state level. But now that route is limited, and

Continued on page 22

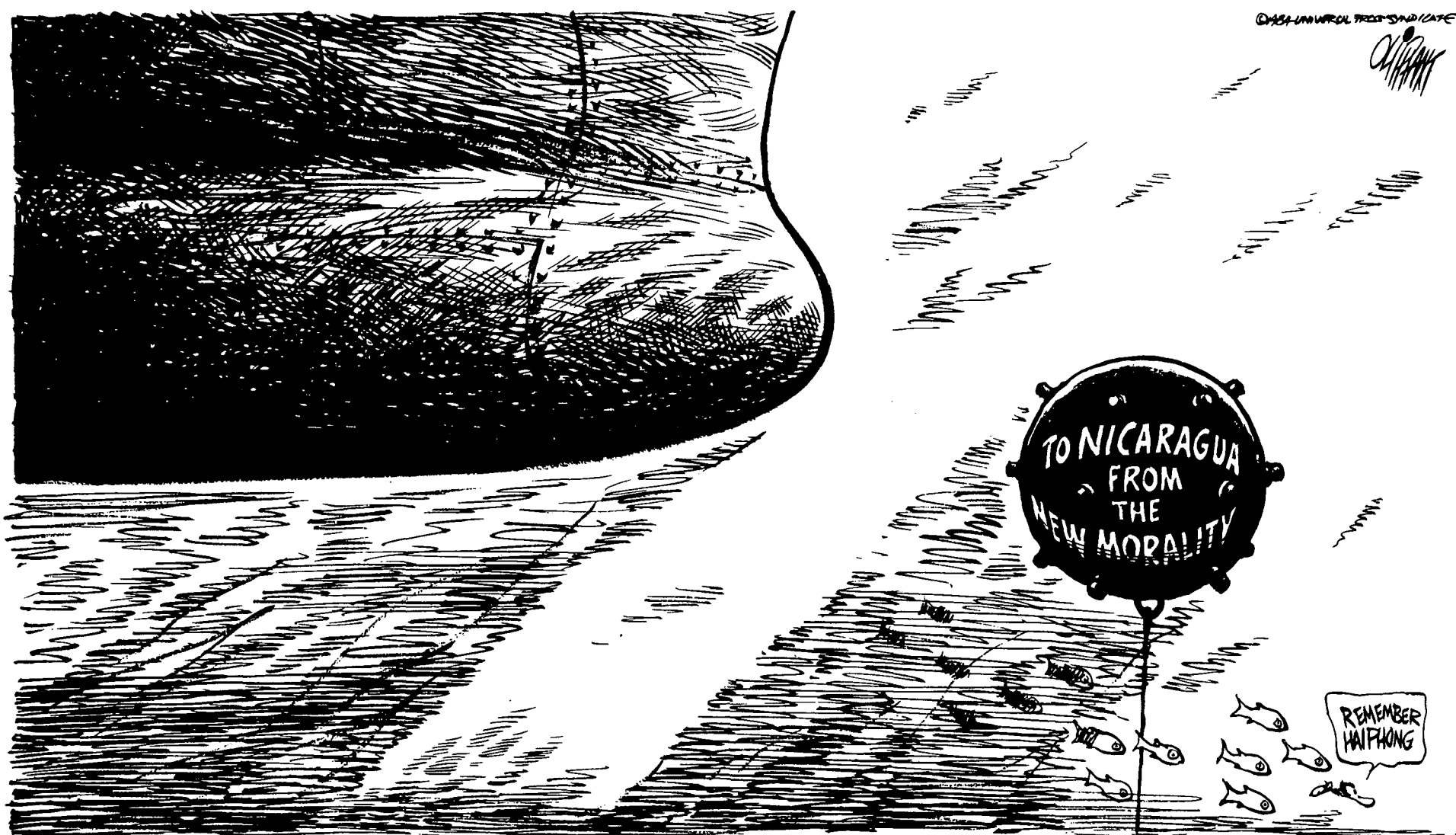
STORY BY JOAN WALSH

urrah



Boston's Mayor Ray Flynn's (left) record so far illustrates the limits as well as the strength of the politics of personal decency.

EDITORIAL



Reagan cast as King George

In what may turn out to be a politically fatal attempt to use his personal popularity and credibility to overcome popular wisdom and historical truth, President Reagan is conducting a major campaign for the renewal of official aid to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries.

Apparently on the theory that if a lie is repeated often enough and with enough conviction it will be accepted by the public at large, Reagan insisted that the Sandinistas "have sworn" to "attempt to spread Communism to El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras" and even "elsewhere." And he warned Congress that if they dared to deny aid to the "freedom fighters" who are now murdering and raping Nicaraguan civilians loyal to the Sandinista regime, the result would be Communist gains in Central America. The implication was that just as they were responsible for having "lost" China—we seem to have found it again—the Democrats would be responsible for the disappearance of Central America.

To cloak his argument in the American revolutionary tradition—remember, it is the Sandinistas who have betrayed their revolution; Reagan professes to be loyal to ours—the president made up a little history lesson. It went like this: "Time and time again we've aided those around the world struggling for freedom, democracy, independence and liberation from tyranny." He then mentioned Simon Bolivar in the 19th century, but forgot about Zapata and Sandino in the 20th. "It's not an American tradition to turn away, and lucky for us that those who loved democracy 200 years ago didn't turn away from us," he added, citing Lafayette, "who helped us defeat General Cornwallis and assure the British surrender at Yorktown."

"America may never have been born without the help and support of the freedom-loving people of Europe, of Lafayette, von Steuben and Kosciuszko," Reagan continued. (Baron von Steuben, a Prussian officer, served with Washington and helped train the Continental Army. Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Polish general, fought with Washington in the Revolution and championed Polish independence.) "And now," Reagan

concluded, "the free people of El Salvador, Honduras and, yes, Nicaragua ask for our help" against the Soviet oppressors.

This was a stirring appeal, but it had one fault. The United States' role in Central America today is analogous to that of Britain in regard to its colonies in North America in the 18th century. And if anyone is analogous to Lafayette, von Steuben and Kosciuszko in Nicaragua today, it is not Reagan but Fidel Castro and Konstantin Chernenko. Like the baron and the generals of old Europe, they are siding with the revolutionaries in Central America in their attempt to break free of neo-colonialism. Reagan, however badly cast, is in the role of King George, trying to keep the colonies within the empire.

But in one respect Reagan is correct in claiming that what he is trying to do in Central America is "totally consistent with our history." For our history, since 1900, has been one of constant intervention on behalf of military dictators and other tyrants acting as agents of Corporate America, and it has been one of consistent opposition to the "Communist threat"—even before there were any Communists to threaten us. In the early years of the century, when all this was more freely discussed in polite society, these policies were known as "dollar diplomacy," and the countries of Central America dominated by the United Fruit Company and other corporations were known as banana republics.

Under Reagan, these regimes have been transformed rhetorically into models of democracy, but the underlying reality has not changed. The oligarchs and dictators who run these countries in cooperation with American capital are "our friends," and the people of those countries who seek their own ways to free themselves are "our enemies." And since the American people would not support an open policy of supporting oligarchs against popular revolutionaries, the revolutionaries must be transformed into Communist devils.

Of course, Ronald Reagan did not invent this rhetoric. Credit for that goes back to Woodrow Wilson and his war to make the world safe for democracy, by which he

meant safe access by Western capital and for the modernization, political and social, that he believed would follow. And to the Russian Revolution, which provides the Bolshevik bugaboo. Nor could the Reagan view of the world prevail in the U.S. without the cooperation of both major parties and the media. That's what the Cold War consensus has been all about, and it's what the "Vietnam syndrome" broke up in the late '60s.

The Vietnam syndrome, a widespread popular understanding that American intervention in the Third World was imperial in nature and had little or nothing to do with democracy—that "our" good guys were really bad guys—stood in the way of keeping the world safe for investment. And one of the basic goals of the Reagan revolution was to overcome that particular shame of Vietnam and get back on track with business as usual.

So far, despite never-ending pressure and subterfuge on the part of the administration, Reagan has not entirely gotten his way. He may be popular, but his policy of military intervention is not. So he is putting his personal popularity on the line in an attempt to put an end to the Vietnam syndrome.

The most disturbing, and threatening, aspect of this is not the administration's doggedness—that was to be expected—it is the way in which virtually the entire commercial media genuflects before the Reagan ideology, thereby enhancing its credibility. Of the various examples, the most striking is that of the *New York Times*, the alleged bastion of responsible journalism, which in recent weeks has acted like a Reagan courtesan. Bruce Cumings (see page 9) details how Clyde Haberman acted as a public relations man for Reagan's man in Seoul. But even more striking was the interview with Reagan conducted by the *Times*' Washington bureau on February 11.

At this interview the *Times* was represented by Gerald M. Boyd, Leslie H. Gelb, Hedrick Smith and Bernard Weintraub. They sounded as if they were interviewing their own publisher in order to get their instructions straight. The most glaring example of that occurred when Boyd asked Reagan about Nicaragua. Reagan said he

was going to continue to press for aid to the *contras* because "what the Nicaraguan people want is the revolution they fought for. And I think they are entitled to have it."

Boyd then asked: "So support to the people of Nicaragua is support to the *contras*?" A reasonable question, to which Reagan replied that the *contras* "certainly are a part of the people, and they were part of the revolution in many instances." He then went on to compare Nicaragua and El Salvador. El Salvador now, he said, "after several elections is a government that is striving for democracy," but in Nicaragua "the so-called Sandinista government is a government that seized power out of the barrel of a gun—it has never been chosen by the people."

To the next question, Reagan gave a similar response. All the Sandinistas would have to do in order to get back in his good graces, he said, is "submit themselves, I should say, and anyone else who chooses to, to the will of the people, by way of elections and voting."

In response, did Boyd remind Reagan that Nicaragua had just had an election in which 62 percent of the voters supported the Sandinistas, and that this election was said by neutral observers to have been more open and free from intimidation than those conducted in El Salvador—something even a careful reading of the *Times*' own coverage made clear? Of course, he did not. Instead, he asked about the form of aid that should be given the *contras*. And when Reagan said he still believed in covert aid, which meant he could not say much about it, Boyd replied meekly, "Right. I understand."

The next day the *Times* editorialized on the interview. It concluded that perhaps Reagan was a bit too eager to intervene militarily. But still, "couldn't the *contra* army hurt the Sandinistas enough to make them willing to deal?" The policy choices, the *Times* concluded, "are not between blind force and abject acquiescence." Indeed, what is needed is "judicious pressure." Or, in other words, continued aid to the *contras*, but not enough to cause "unthinkable escalation or the ultimate humiliation of failing to achieve our stated purpose." Just enough, in other words, to make it impossible for the Sandinistas to stabilize their regime and succeed with their own development plans.

That is what's known as responsible journalism. ■

Still Counting

I HAVE JUST COME BACK FROM THREE weeks in Nicaragua picking coffee with 42 other brigade members from all over the U.S. There are three questions on my mind.

1) How can the U.S., the most powerful country in the world, feel any threat from that impoverished nation?

2) Why is the Sandinista government called "communist" when 65 percent of the industry and commerce is privately owned?

3) How can our government justify intervening militarily in a sovereign country?

I would like to see the U.S. provide material and medical aid, not arms, to the underdeveloped countries of Central America.

If you have any doubts about our government's policy in Central America, let your Congress member know. He/she will be considering funding in that area during the first part of March. Every letter counts.

—Myfanwy Plank
Santa Rosa, Calif.

The Solid Lunch Box

PAT AUFDERHEIDE'S LONG ESSAY ON romance novels (*ITT*, Feb. 6) was detailed and informative without being very illuminating. It's not helpful, for instance, to probe how such books appear to deal with women's needs for love, emotional life, etc., or that they deal with "real needs" without saying what *kind* of reality is involved.

Even a quick review of the genre (back to Aphra Behn, Ann Radcliffe, and the Brontës) would suggest that the romance, like its theatrical analogue the melodrama (with which it shares a great deal), is a *petit-bourgeois* art form. Notice the sentimental evanescent scenery, the diaphanous characters: nothing is stable, there are no political or social issues or even ideas of any kind. Which is why such productions are the favored fodder of the suburbs during the time of late monopoly capitalism. If working-class women read them and pay good money for them, so much the worse for them.

It would be better if *ITT* probed more deeply what false consciousness is in our present epoch, how the ruling ideas of every age are those of the ruling class, etc. Lots of workers probably put Twinkies in their lunch boxes, but we don't say they're good nutrition just because they're popular.

—Fred Whitehead
Kansas City, Mo.

The Mentally Ill

JOAN WALSH'S COVER STORY ON THE "homeless mentally ill" (*ITT*, Jan. 23) is based on the same paternalistic, bigoted assumptions as those in the mainstream press. Foremost is the assumption that the policies and programs of the mental health system are to be discussed without the slightest input from the users, past and present, of that system. Everyone clucks in hypocritical sympathy about the tragedy of mental illness, but no one wants to listen to its supposed victims. Joan Walsh pretends, in typical liberal style, that her "balanced" examination of the "debate" about deinstitutionalization has exposed her readers to the full range of the issues involved. Nothing could be further from the truth.

On top of that, she repeats the usual nonsense about psychiatry's history being one of well-intentioned reforms coopted and neutralized by sterner political realities. The fact is that mental patients have been and remain among the most despised human beings on the planet. Their doctors have never felt any differently. The first people to die in gas ovens in Nazi Germany were mental patients.

The Release and Destruction of Lives Devoid of Value, by Karl Binding and Alfred Hoche, advocated the mass extermination of mental patients. Note well: it was published in 1920, before the rise of Hitler. It was the German psychiatric profession, not the Nazis, who carried out the extermination. They legitimated the more widespread application of such practices later on. Nor were mental patients in the U.S. much better off during the same period. Starvation and disease were widespread and the annual death rate was 20 percent in many institutions. Better than in Nazi concentration camps, but not by much.

Today's homeless are lucky by comparison. Walsh defends the American Psychiatric Association's report on the homeless, but the history of the APA is one of long and shameful fraud, coercion and violence. Suffice it to say that the APA seal proudly bears the portrait of Benjamin Rush. He had this to say about the treatment of "mental illness": "Terror acts powerfully on the body through the medium of the mind, and should be employed in the cure of madness." His numerous tortures were frequently borrowed directly from those in use during the Inquisition.

The mental health system is an important institution of social control in industrialized societies. It was never designed to serve the purpose of liberation from mental illness or anything else. As one psychiatrist described the Berkeley electroshock ban: "It's just another case of the lunatics trying to take over the asylum." User-controlled alternatives to the mental health system, like those described in Judi Chamberlin's book *On Our Own*, are the only ones in which people rendered dependent on the mental health system can gain control over their own lives.

—Sandra L. Ruffner
Anti-Psychiatry Association
Seattle, Wash.

No Chance

CONGRATULATIONS TO JOAN WALSH FOR her well-written, moving, clear, balanced piece on the crisis of the homeless mentally ill (*ITT*, Jan. 23). While graphically describing the crisis she is careful to state that the bottom line of the American Psychiatric Association report is that "there are homeless mentally ill people because community care has never been given a chance to work." She quite correctly quotes APA task force chair Dr. H. Richard Lamb as stressing that the crisis of homelessness among the mentally ill is not "the result of deinstitutionalization per se, but rather on the way deinstitutionalization has been implemented."

I am writing as a retired clinical and research psychologist who has been working professionally for deinstitutionalization with proper community support systems since before the idea was in vogue, and as a former colleague of Dr. Lamb. He has written elsewhere about the large number of mentally ill found in local jails. This is not what was envisioned for the long-term mental hospital patients helped to leave the large state institutions.

—Victor Goertzel, Ph.D.
Seattle, Wash.

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

Women in China

WE FOUND MARCIA YUDKIN'S REPORT on Chinese women (*ITT*, Feb. 6) discouraging. Having also taught recently for a year in China and traveled there extensively, we don't doubt the accuracy of Yudkin's information. But we believe her unreflective, North-American feminist standpoint distorts the dynamics of current Chinese society. China is not the U.S. As a Third World country struggling along the path of socialist construction, it makes gains in social-sexual equality from a subordinate position within the world capitalist system. China has inherited cultural burdens vis-a-vis sex, gender, family ideology and kinship. Familism has weighed heavily on Chinese women and youth.

Against this heritage the Chinese Communist Party's record as the country's only institutional advocate of sexual equality, though not unblemished, is consistent and notable. Granted the CCP will not press women's emancipation to the exclusion of other goals; after all, it is a socialist and not a feminist party. But it does challenge many vested interests and conservative practices to a degree remarkable in a society as heavily marked by "feudal" remnants as is post-Mao China. Besides, the insidious sexism reported by Yudkin cannot be overcome by itself, but only with the transformation of Chinese society as a whole.

Unfortunately, Yudkin's view of China is common not only among Western feminists but also among Western socialists. Most people in the West find China lacking when measured against their Western norms. The other side of the coin is a tendency to sympathize and sentimentalize the oppressed—in this case, Chinese women. However, neither the Westernist point of view or sentiment for the oppressed in the name of womanhood or humanity gets us any closer to an understanding of changing reality in China, or of the Chinese people.

—Tan E. Barlow and Donald M. Lowe
San Francisco

(Barlow and Lowe's *Americans Teaching at a Chinese University: Encounter of Two Worlds* will be published in the fall by F.A. Praeger.)

The Therapeutic Road to Socialism

I FELT A NEED TO RESPOND TO JOHN JUDIS' cynical assertions about personal transformation (*ITT*, Jan. 23). In fact, personal transformation is the only basis for genuine socialist democracy. If, as Judis says, changes in personality seem slow and invisible, this is largely because the

left's models of social change don't consciously address emotional and interpersonal change. And lip service to personal transformation, even though not forthcoming, is not enough. We must live our beliefs if we expect to reach most people with our vision. But by their narrow concept of socialism and politics, socialist theorists reinforce the separation of ends and means. By dismissing the topic in one short paragraph, Judis' priorities are clear.

Also, by asserting a one-sidedly gradualist model of emotional change to explain why revolutions revert back to old, oppressive patterns, Judis misses the point. Our feelings are not isolated, but are part of a social and historical field. When the feelings we suppress in class society surface in a revolution, "negative," painful stuff will come up, a lifetime of accumulation. Unless therapy is built into the social change process all along, this will subvert socialist democracy. Similarly, the underdeveloped society's social division of labor and the economic deformation in previous revolutions was historically limiting, as reflected in their social field of feeling.

Until the center of gravity of debate about socialism starts shifting to a more integrated understanding of how personal and social change are intimately linked, we will not be able to reach out to make real changes in this country.

—Mike Wyatt
Madison, Wisc.

Wyatt is the author of *New Age Socialism: Integrating Emotional, Spiritual and Social Liberation*.

Left Out?

LEON FINK'S STORY OF THE DAVID WHITE-Doris Turner conflict (*ITT*, Jan. 23) and the changes in Local 1199 was revealing for its complete omission of any discussion of gender issues in connection with this struggle.

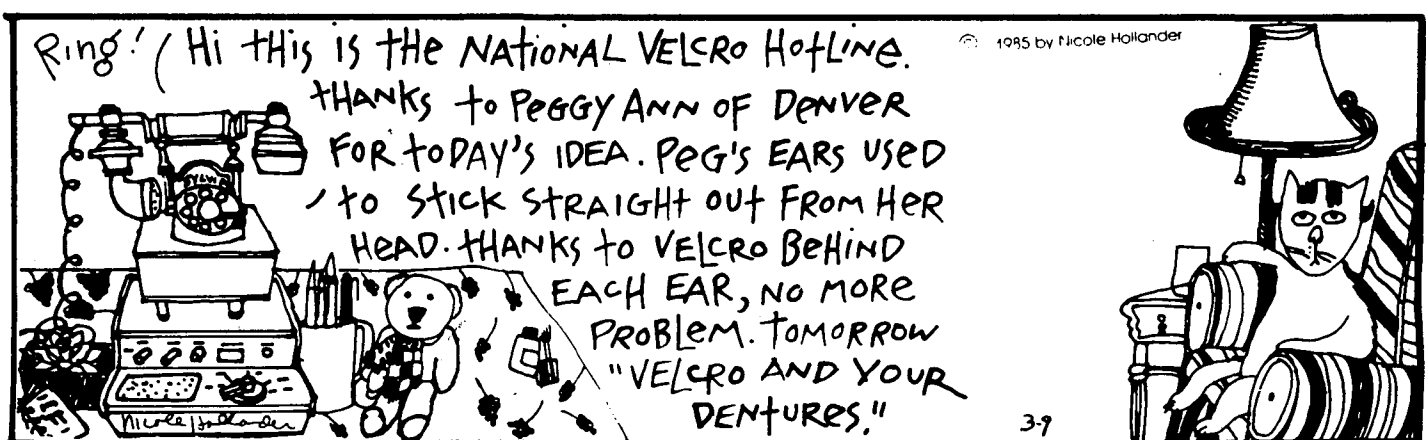
The majority of hospital workers are female; the struggle within 1199 was about the empowerment of people of color and also about the empowerment of women. In this regard, White's contrast between the black male servant at Turner's house and Leon Davis' wife "doing the cooking" is telling. Both are symbols of oppression. We ought to be equally outraged by sex-role as by race/class exploitation.

That Fink's article omitted any discussion of gender simply underscores the continued lack of sensitivity to women's issues on the part of the left.

—Rochelle Ruthchild
Somerville, Mass.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



PERSPECTIVES

How the Karate Kid helped elect me

By James Edison Notestein

ON MAY 21, 1984, I WAS INVITED to a meeting of citizens to discuss the fielding of a candidate against an incumbent Alachua, Fla., county commissioner up for re-election. Qualifying was July 21 and the election would be on the Tuesday after Labor Day. Citizens representing environmental and neighborhood interests had elected two city commissioners within the past two years and were now looking to enter the county race.

The meeting chairman reviewed the major ingredients: a viable candidate, a team of people to serve the campaign and money. Strengths of the incumbent were noted: he had the backing of the business community, membership in powerful organizations and no lack of funds. His record was pro-development.

The citizens group was pessimistic. No one with voter recognition or strong personality was willing to run. No one was willing to manage a campaign.

While reviewing the map of the district in which the candidate must live, it suddenly occurred to me that I could be the next county commissioner. With my background in city planning and architecture, with the experiences of starting a farmers' market, a food co-op, teaching adult classes in energy conservation and solar technology, leadership skills gained from serving on a variety of civic advisory boards, I felt prepared to deal with the problems of my county.

The next evening, I began calling members of the search committee—sounding them out regarding my candidacy. Based on the encouragement I received, I prepared a written statement for the group's next meeting.

My platform had three elements: environmental protection, integrity of neighborhoods, growth management.

The group listened to my presentation and that of two other qualified but reluctant

persons. They were polite and asked serious questions, but showed no great enthusiasm. The qualifying deadline of July 21 was near. Where was the \$1,200 fee to come from? Who would be responsible for each of the major campaign tasks? Noting the small search committee—about 15—everyone was urged to bring at least two others to the next organizational meeting.

But the following week even fewer people attended. Pessimists in the group declared it would take \$15,000-\$20,000 to run an adequate race. At this point I objected. I contended a serious, grassroots campaign could win for \$3,000 or less. As the chairman sought commitments for a campaign team, one excuse after another surfaced.

After two more meetings, which were even less well attended, I heard myself saying, "Friends, I am running with you or without you, but I am the candidate for the office of county commissioner, District I."

And thus began one of the most exciting adventures of my life. By voicing confidence in myself, the mood of the group changed. Organizational and financial support immediately began to flow. I set up the campaign account in a local credit union. (Commercial banks had always been used before.) We started our team with seven people. My earliest supporter was a retired history professor who served as treasurer and made a major contribution. A woman who had been a candidate for our senatorial district offered to oversee media details. The local president of Friends of the Earth took charge of literature distribution. A long-time school teacher promised to coordinate the hand-held signs on election day street corners. A 72-year-old Trinidadian responded to my need for car-top signs. A young stranger said she would attend to fundraising. A former Collier County commissioner promised to assemble and analyze voter registration rolls. And there it was—my team.

About this time, Americans for the Environment and the Arms Control Education Project were planning to hold a workshop

in Daytona entitled: "How to Run and Win an Electoral Campaign." Local members of the Clean Water Project asked me to attend this workshop. About 200 people attended. Several were candidates for a variety of offices. The program was thorough and timely. I came home with my head buzzing with plans and strategy.

I made phone calls to hundreds of friends—sounding them out about my candidacy, their views on issues and willingness to play a role in my campaign. A former city commissioner with a distinguished record of public service offered to counsel me on a regular basis. At these weekly sessions we developed content, style and process.

One night, a book title jumped off my shelf at me—*How to Write, Speak and*

medical facilities or recreation were not answered. I developed a response to this by emphasizing accountability, accessibility, honesty and open-mindedness. I didn't know the answers to everything, but I pledged to be their voice and not their deaf ear of the past. I tried to renew the people's faith in the process of participatory democracy.

On the Friday before the Tuesday election, the major local daily newspaper endorsed my candidacy in their editorial. Citing my broad-based participation in the community, the writer suggested that now was the time for a commissioner who marched to a different drummer—sensitive to the concerns of environment, citizen access, growth management and inter-governmental cooperation.



Photographer unknown

Think Effectively. I read a chapter each evening. Finishing that, I felt elevated. My 13-year-old son suggested we see the movie *The Karate Kid*. This presentation of the success that came from dedicated struggle in the face of great odds filled me with confidence.

On July 10, I held a press conference and declared myself a candidate for the office of Alachua County commissioner. I outlined my platform for the press—beginning and ending my speech with the phrase: "This county is not for sale."

Now, I returned to the telephone, calling all the people who had bought firewood from me, attended my energy classes, had a garden tilled by me, had bought plants from my nursery or had served with me in community projects. They were the base of my grassroots campaign. I needed something from them now—advice, support, money. By July 20, we had almost enough money. We checked the mail on the morning of the 21st—we had \$1,200 for the qualifying fee.

July and August in north central Florida is not an inspiring time. Everyone would like to be somewhere else. It is hot and humid. Somehow I had to create enthusiasm for my campaign. There seemed to be a virtual media blackout on my race. Most attention was focused on the school board and the other commission seat with four contenders.

I outlined a program that included visits to the eight small towns in our county. When I appeared at the official and informal gatherings of these places, people were impressed—they had not seen a county commissioner for a long time. And it was an education for me. They felt they were being taxed without adequate representation. Requests for improvements in roads or drainage, increased library service, emergency

Jim Notestein won election as a county commissioner in Florida with a grassroots campaign, despite no prior experience and almost no money.

On September 4, the people of my home county for more than 20 years, elected me by a margin of 234 votes out of 13,430 cast. Our grassroots, low-budget campaign had defeated an incumbent who was endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce, homebuilders, realtors, labor unions and other groups who brokered political power in the county of Alachua. Despite being labeled by my opponent as a one-issue candidate, it is now clear that a majority of our citizens favor a policy of environmental protection and growth management that preserves the integrity of neighborhoods and supports citizen participation in the process of local government.

In analyzing the voting patterns in the 44 precincts, it was clear that everything and everyone in the campaign was critically important: the hand-held signs on the street corners, letters to the editor, the county-wide motorcade, candidate forums, numerous meetings with small groups everywhere, personal contact by phone with everyone I knew and the phone banks of the team. As I had predicted, it didn't cost \$15,000-\$20,000 for a successful campaign—only \$2,700. That is a national record for counties of a similar size (160,000 population).

I would like to encourage other people not to be intimidated by the seeming power of entrenched, special interests. From the local to the national level, citizens must take back the government by continuous participation in the political process. The process works well—but only if we make it work.

The Honorable James Edison Notestein is Alachua County (Fla.) commissioner.

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DIALOG

Politics was forced on environmentalists

By Robert Schaeffer

THE ISSUE POSED BY BOB Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, "Can the ecoactivists take on envirocrats? (*ITT*, Feb. 6), is all wrong. The relevant question is not whether grassroots activists can contest bureaucratic control of the environmental movement, but whether "greens" (ecoactivists and envirocrats together) can take on a Republican administration that is determined to wreak havoc on the environment.

In their brief survey of the environmental movement, Gottlieb and Wiley make three related claims. First, they argue that by associating themselves with Walter Mondale and the Democrats in the last election, environmentalists painted themselves into a special-interest-group corner. Consequently, the movement lost "much of its dynamism as a broad-based political force."

This decision, they assert, was made by "envirocrats." This "professional managerial" group wrested control of environmental organizations from "ecoactivists" (single-issue, grassroots organizers) during the '70s and then "reduced [the movement's] global vision and muted their critique of corporate industrialism."

All is not lost, however. While the envirocrats control the movement's institutions, Gottlieb and Wiley believe that a "renewed and explosive type of ecoactivism," galvanized by the eco-disasters of the modern era, can unseat the envirocrats and "create a more unified and dynamic [grassroots-based] movement."

These three claims are based on a curious reading of environmental history, which leads Gottlieb and Wiley to draw erroneous conclusions about the state of the movement and the issues before it.

Partisan politics.

Environmentalists are not on the political defensive because they were "robbed of their strength" by the Democratic Party during the '84 electoral campaign, but because they were crushed by the Republicans back in '80.

Environmentalists entered partisan politics and associated with the Democratic Party reluctantly. Why? Because environmentalists secured important gains in the '70s—the creation of the clean air and water acts and the EPA, the slowing down of commercial nuclear power deployment and the private development of public and wild lands—as a broad-based, non-partisan political force that was able to work successfully with Republican (Nixon and Ford) and Democratic (Carter) administrations. (Recall that the conservation movement gained its first recognition in the early 20th century under another Republican administration, that of Teddy Roosevelt.) Environmentalists saw no reason to give up a successful non-partisan political strategy.

Then came Reagan-Watt and the anti-regulatory, anti-environmental backlash. Environmentalists were swept out of Congress and state agencies charged with protecting the environment were eviscerated. One can blame the Republicans, the economic-energy crisis, the renewed search for cheap raw materials and land and the mobilization of anti-regulatory public sentiment for this development, but it is absurd to blame the Democrats or environmentalists for their own defeat.

Still, Gottlieb and Wiley raise an interesting question: Was it wise for some groups (Friends of the Earth first, then the Sierra Club and others later) to endorse

WASSERMAN
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Mondale and concentrate their electoral efforts on work within the Democratic Party?

At the national level, probably not. But at the local level, where grassroots activity counts, it probably was a good move. Environmental candidates bucked the Republican tide—no mean feat given its power—and environmentalists found electoral work to be an effective vehicle for organizing around green concerns like acid rain and toxic wastes.

Fat cats and envirocrats.

What about Gottlieb and Wiley's argument that envirocrats have captured the movement and muted its vision?

The really big environmental groups—Audubon, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club (with many million members together)—have been run by paid professional staff (many of them Republicans) for a long time. So it's silly to argue that they wrested control of these organizations from ecoactivists and then sold them out.

The characterization of Washington-based, paid movement staff as "envirocrat" has several problems. First, what is an envirocrat and how can they be identified? The answer is that they are an invention fashioned out of pseudo-sociological whole cloth, the same cloth that was shaped into denim "blue-collar" classes a few years ago and Gortex yuppies today.

Second, that characterization confuses the nature and overstates the extent of conflicts within and between the movement's constituent groups. There are disagreements between unpaid grassroots organizers and paid institutional staff—where and how to allocate scarce movement resources, what issues to push. But the lines cannot be drawn as easily as Gottlieb and Wiley suggest, nor is the outcome given in advance. One would expect from their description that envirocrats would monopolize political power and financial resources and suffocate grassroots activity. But this hasn't happened. The movement remains diverse, pluralistic and non-

sectarian by social movement standards.

Sure, the movement has its trust puppets, arrogant bureaucrats and ambitious political hacks. So what? The bulk of the paid and unpaid cadre are working people; some of us even unionized. It is ridiculous to claim that the movement is the captive of any particular class or financial interest. The effort to do so (by William Tucker in *Progress and Privilege* or Gottlieb and Wiley) is misguided and, in the end, irrelevant.

Gottlieb and Wiley seem to believe that the Love Canals and Bhopals of the modern world galvanize grassroots activity and replenish the supply of visionary ecoactivists. If that were only true. If so, then blacks and minorities in inner-city urban areas, subject as they are to the highest concentrations of air- and water-borne toxins and most fully deprived of open space and wilderness values, would be America's foremost environmentalists.

But political activity does not necessarily spring from ecological disaster any more than it does from economic depression. James Watt mobilized environmental public opinion, while his successors, pursuing the same policies, did not. Gottlieb and Wiley's version of the old, discredited theory of economic determinism cannot explain or fathom this. Environmentalism is the pipedream of people looking for easy solutions to complex problems.

How can greens secure real gains in the near and present future? We must first

To argue that big environmental groups are taking over the movement is silly. That's nothing new.

recognize that the principal obstacle to environmental gains is not envirocrats or Democrats, but a deficit-conscious Congress and an administration intent on promoting economic growth at environmental expense.

Given that, I think greens should do several things.

First, we should continue to broaden the meaning of environmentalism and make the movement more diverse and comprehensive. This means bringing new issues—the arms race, the crisis of American agriculture, tax and industrial policy—to the attention of environmentalists already concerned with natural resources and wildlife and the public at large.

Second, we should evaluate the role electoral politics and the partisanization of the movement can play in realizing political objectives. Political action committees and electoral work are extremely expensive undertakings for a social movement, and they risk certain compromises with the powers that be. But they also keep one's foot in the political door, at a time when the heavy shoulders of industry are leaning to close it.

Third, the movement should stay institutionally diverse and remain, to a certain degree, politically diverse. Disunity has advantages: being able to move nimbly from issue to issue, avoiding being seen by the general public as a homogeneous group that provides the opposition with an identifiable target. The attempt to unify the movement into a Green Party, which is an extremely expensive undertaking, is a bad political and financial idea. It presumes that the movement should set the seizure of government as its goal. Much better to continue developing alternative agricultural, industrial, energy and community strategies and local utopias, out of which a vision of an alternative society might emerge, and continue working with greens around the world to foster and share a global vision.

Robert Schaeffer is the managing editor of *Not Man Apart*, the monthly news-magazine of Friends of the Earth.



Detail of a Diego Rivera painting from the cover of ACCUMULATION CRISIS.

ECONOMICS

Beyond the fiscal crisis of the state

Accumulation Crisis

By James O'Connor

Basil Blackwell, 261 pp., \$17.50

By Douglas Dowd

JAMES O'CONNOR'S *Fiscal Crisis of the State* (1973) broke new ground in several ways. It was the first intensive study of American fiscal processes—governmental spending, taxing and debt—by a Marxian economist. It was, and remains, unique in integrating fiscal with broader economic, political and social processes and relationships. It prepared its readers to understand the ensuing decade. That is no small achievement. But his most recent *Accumulation Crisis* is an even more important book.

However turbulent the '60s may have been, that decade stands as the most buoyant in world capitalism's history. It was a period of unparalleled worldwide capital accumulation. Enabling that process, and enhanced by it, was a cluster of tightly related and mutually interdependent socioeconomic developments: the triumph of neo-colonialism (both despite and because of resistance and revolution in the Third World), the spreading and deepening of new technologies, the emergence and solidification of consumerism as a way of life in all the industrial countries, astronomical levels of military spending in strategic nations of all "three worlds," the perfection of the techniques of mind management for commercial and political purposes. Making all this possible and giving direction to it is the ever more closely intertwined and dominating activities of the world's supercorporations and

superstates. In short, it was a decade of fundamental global change.

This complex of developments would have been impossible had it not been for the state's undergirding of an unprecedented process of debt accumulation. Indebtedness—of individuals, of companies, of governments, within and between nations—financed all forms of spending. In turn this allowed for higher levels of production and development, jobs, incomes and taxation and thus of more borrowing and more spending.

Fiscal Crisis showed why and how that merry-go-round would inexorably lead to motion sickness. In illuminating the inability of then-current levels and kinds of taxing and spending to continue, O'Connor foresaw looming political conflict between groups and classes that had been at relative peace with each other. Without predicting the outcome, O'Connor made it clear that the stage was being set for a substantial move either to the right or the left. The move was to the right, in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The key role in this shift has been provided by a well-fueled resurgence of raw capitalist ideology, what O'Connor calls "neo-individualism." But the nurturing role of this ideological triumph by and for capitalist rule serves also as a major element in the ongoing crisis. O'Connor summarizes his argument:

Strong threads of continuity through change...are woven into the history of capitalist crises. More specifically, "solutions" to past crises became "problems" during succeeding ones. In economic terms, the thesis of the present work is that the "solution" adopted by capital and the state

in postwar USA to historical crises of overproduction of capital slowly but inexorably created a crisis of underproduction of capital defined in terms of insufficient amounts of surplus value produced and unproductive utilization of the surplus value which was produced. In sociological terms, the argument is that the working class and salariat, large-scale capital and new forms of capitalist competition, and the state, i.e., the structure of modern U.S. society, increasingly, albeit blindly, became social barriers to capitalist accumulation.

I have underscored "economic" and "sociological" to make two points. The lesser of these, but also important, is that for those unfamiliar with Marx's *Capital*, the "economic terms" will be difficult to understand. However, the "sociological" analysis, which moves along with the former and reflects back on it, makes the entire analysis understandable.

The economic terms constitute a careful, ingenious and successful adaptation and transformation of classical Marxian economic theory to fit American capitalism in the late 20th century. The heart of the book is in the four successive chapters in which O'Connor analyzes and clarifies "the money and commodity circuits of capital and the modern economic struggle," "the productive circuit of capital," "the process of consumption" and "economic and social reproduction and the capitalist state." These chapters alone are a *tour de force*.

Those who agree with Marxian theory may argue with O'Connor, and some will be enraged. The latter are those who object to any modification of classical Marxian theory, let alone extension of that theory into the "sociological" realm. O'Connor will be criticized. But as a scholar he has struggled long and well to apply his analytical powers to the needs of ordinary people. The manner in which he has done so has helped to keep Marxism alive and dynamic.

Douglas Dowd is professor of economics at San Jose State University in California.

HISTORY

New meaning to the word culture

Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century

By Warren I. Susman

Pantheon Books, 352 pp. \$12.95

By James Gilbert

IN RECENT YEARS, SOCIAL HISTORY has captured the undivided attention of academic historians. Under its aegis, remarkable progress has been made in discovering the identity and behavior of millions of individuals and uncelebrated groups of oppressed and exploited minorities.

It has also given new meaning to the word culture. No longer does "culture" signify what the rich and influential consume in their leisure. Culture can also be a force, a means of resisting integration, cooptation and exploitation. For example, in the 19th century in the U.S., the culture of immigrants enabled them to resist immediate transformation into willing proletarians. A subterranean culture allowed many women to find solace and community with each other despite the overbearing paternalism of men.

But there is another meaning of culture that points to a different sort of history, a history that has been emerging in the last decade or so. This is the idea of culture as potential power. It is a comprehensive term that describes the ideas and behavior with which a whole society, as well as its competing communities, come to terms with social change and issues of struggle and dominance.

One of the leading practitioners of this new cultural history is Warren Susman, whose new collection

of essays, *Culture as History*, is persuasive and immensely suggestive.

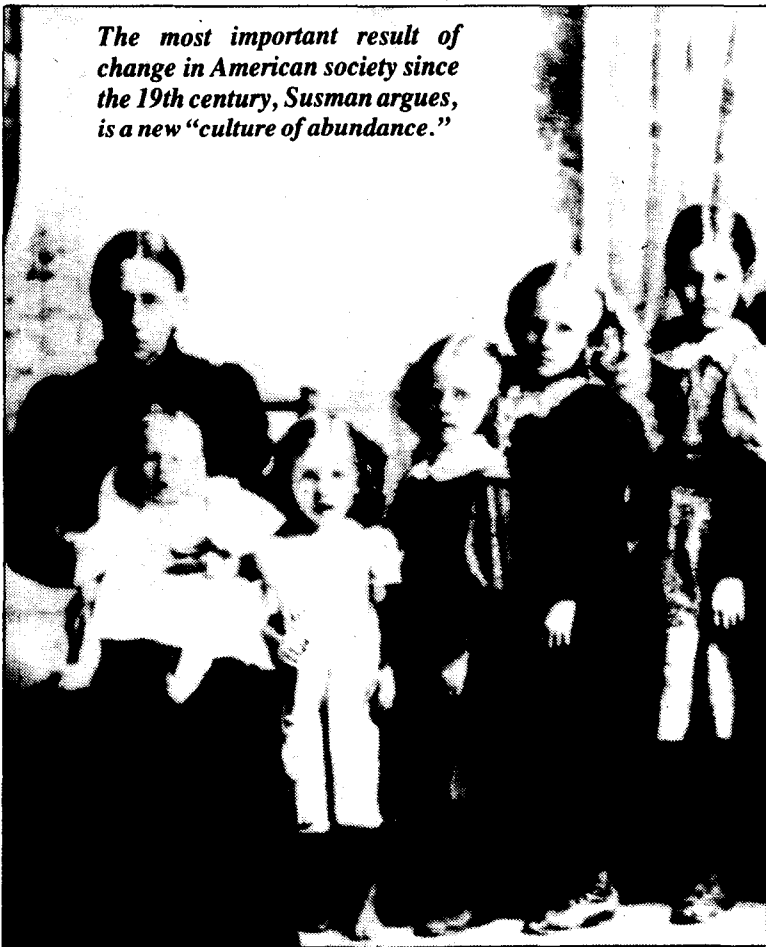
Susman's subject is the transformation of American society since the late 19th century. The most important result of change, he contends, was a new "culture of abundance" based upon innovative technologies, communications and production, that manifested itself in a shift away from the older society of consumption for need. To Susman, this shift involves a problem and a paradox. The problem is to understand how ideas, traditions and older assumptions shaped this accommodation to abundance. Culture no longer aimed at justifying hard work and scarcity, but explored avenues of pleasure and waste.

There was nothing inevitable about the shape of new structures of transportation, communication and culture in the 20th century.

No longer does culture signify what the rich consume in their leisure.

Thus Susman spends considerable time discussing the aims and accomplishments of Henry Ford. His innovations helped shape the automobile industry as well as the way in which cars were integrated into the American life. Without his vision of an affordable vehicle, the whole structure of the industry, as well as a way of life, might have been different. The paradox resulted, however, because of the inherent contradictions in the cul-

The most important result of change in American society since the 19th century, Susman argues, is a new "culture of abundance."



Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the 20th Century

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ture of abundance. Searching for leisure, self-fulfillment, gratification and personality, Americans often found failure, uneasiness, tension and alienation. The utopia of abundance achieved still left a great many Americans yearning for a different life.

Susman's essays range from the cultural uses of American history and myths, to the character of conservatism and socialism, to key symbolic events such as the New York World's Fair of 1939, to personalities such as Henry Ford and Babe Ruth. Each of these essays is premised upon the disjunctions of modern culture—the contradiction between the social order (civilization) and an increasingly detached culture grown up in response to social change. He finds that the dream of American life, its promise of bounty and wealth, has been seen by many Americans as empty riches.

Susman separates himself from contemporary cultural historians such as Christopher Lasch whose laments about the present sometimes imply an unintended nostalgic conservatism. Susman greatly admires the creative ingenuity of modern civilization and culture. At the same time, he recognizes the degree to which we have chosen the society we live in. We are not, he contends, the helpless playthings of blind determinism. Choices made by men and women created the new culture of abundance out of the old social order of work and scarcity.

These propositions furnish Susman with his hopefulness; an optimism and playfulness that brilliantly renders insights into every subject he touches and suggests the existence of a hidden side—the “undeveloped dialectic”—of American society. Instead of bemoaning the qualities of the culture of abundance, Susman celebrates the energy and creativity of American society. He recognizes that only in this way can one even begin to suggest means to change it.

James Gilbert is a professor of history at the University of Maryland. His latest book is *Another Chance*, a history of the U.S. since 1945.



Love Medicine
By Louise Erdrich
Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 275 pp., \$13.95

By Paul Skenazy

LOVE MEDICINE IS A remarkable first novel that stares more boldly at many of the truths of Native American life in this country than any fiction I've read. It recently won the National Book Critic's Circle award for fiction and the recognition is deserved.

It's about Chippewa women and men living in North Dakota: about their lives, their love affairs proper and adulterous, their children. It is about faith and impiety, nunneries and jails, movie Indians and reservation politics. It features a man who fights with a deer in his car, a boy who finds himself marrying the wrong woman because of two geese and a pillow case and a girl who tries to bake a nun. It is an offbeat book that keeps you surprised, upsetting your most comforting illusions. It is a deeply if ironically spiritual novel.

The book consists of 14 overlapping stories that tell of how two families, the Kashpaws and the Lamartines, gradually come to a recognition of their common fate. The stories are set from the present back to 1934. They take place over much of the U.S. map, and take the reader into the confessional box and the ravaged mind of a Vietnam vet, from the woods to bus station waiting rooms and the discomforts of intercourse on the front seat of a pickup.

But the book is quirky in its organization. Most of the tales feature the same cast of characters, but there are few transitions between events to provide continuity, and the stories are presented through a shifting populace of narrators. *Love Medicine* is a novel that aims at rather than achieves cohesion and wholeness. It is a collection in search of finality.

Erdrich is working in an American tradition that dates back at least to Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, and which has been used by many of the more interesting books of the past year, e.g. Harriet Doerr's *Stones for Ibarra* and Ellen Gilchrist's *Victory Over Japan*. What is left out is the stuffing of daily event that provides comfort and helps to bind lives and communities together. All we get are the shocking events, the moments of breakdown or self-discovery in one's world. Everything is made to appear somewhat arbitrary, creating a situation in which the individual seems less a powerful and self-generated identity than the consequences of a surrounding community of characters and lives. Characters are vulnerable to the past, to peers and to a destiny both eccentric and unaccountable.

Gradually, the stories build on each other, though less as a logical progression than as an accumulation of impressions, a kind of mosaic of snapshots. Finally, there is even a framing narrative that lends cohesion to the seemingly disparate episodes.

In the first chapter, a woman intent on suicide decides to walk home to her village during a



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fiction award.

Peter Hannan

FICTION

Fifty-year saga of Chippewa life

snowstorm, and people congregate to mourn her death and continue age-old squabbles with each other. In the last chapter, a son—her son—discovers his paternity and ends his spiritual exile. In between, we read of the significant events in the history of the Kashpaws and Lamartines that have led to the suicide, the bickering, the lost father, the exile. The tales of the family members offer a saga of Chippewa life over the last 50 years. Each story provides a glimpse into a culture. The “hero” proves to be the community, not an individual.

Separated from family, faith and themselves even in the midst of reservation life, the characters seek a homeland, a place of order from which their lives might begin, and to which they might return. They strike up alliances with a car, a distant moment of childhood, a job they hate—anything that might prove less impermanent than their world seems to be. But mistakes repeat through generations and the suffering continues more or less unrelieved. Forces, ranging from the comic mishaps of growing older to poverty, war, jail or the wearing uncertainty of love, intervene, making normal existence turn surreal.

A lonely adopted child finds her moment of companionship with siblings when she encourages them to hang her from a tree. A man rushing to meet his lover burns her house down instead. A boy discovers that all he can do to help his suffering brother is to let him die. A tender and pacific man who escapes from prison to see his wife and child ends up a suspected murderer. Even the spiritual sources of tribal lore prove the characters' undoing, as in the story of a wife who while trying to preserve her husband's love by administering a potion that instead kills him.

Erdrich understands the way poverty and racism, sexism and the woes of everyday life intermingle until it becomes impossible to account simply for one's anguish or pleasure. She finds her metaphors for these battered, worn individuals in pies, in cards, in car fenders and rosaries and fish bobbers and donated clothes. “You wear your life like a garment from the mission bundle sale...lightly because you realize you never paid nothing for it, cherishing because you know you won't ever come by such a bargain again. Also you have the feeling someone wore it before you and someone will

after” Her epiphanies, when they come, are soiled by irony: in a wonderful story of old age near the end of the novel a woman finds herself dependent on her husband's former lover for eye-drop treatments that permit her to see.

Sometimes Erdrich's voice seems falsely colloquial, or the metaphors don't quite mix properly with the narrative tone. And at times the endings of individual tales are a bit forced. Turns of prose are used to redeem characters because the plots proved unable to or a beautiful image was too conveniently allowed to deflect attention from suffering that deserved to be recognized in its horror.

But this is a fine novel. Like some of the other spectacular debut works of the last few years—Maxine Hong Kingston's *Woman Warrior*, Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*, Joan Chase's *During the Reign of the Queen of Persia*—there is nothing apprentice, nothing “promising” about *Love Medicine*; it is a book that satisfies the expectations it creates and then some.

If uneven, it is still challenging and convincing. It offers an unblinking image of the U.S. Erdrich confirms the despair felt when we consider the consequences of oppression and inequity on the lives of Native Americans. But her always devoted, sometimes shocking, occasionally comic fictional census allows us entrance to a culture we have too long denied recognition as a part of our own.

Paul Skenazy teaches literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and regularly reviews fiction for *In These Times*.

HOLLYWOOD

Reagan illusion mill outdazzles Oscar flash

By Pat Aufderheide

FOR THE LAST FIFTY YEARS, the Academy Awards have been a sanctifying ritual for celebrity, as well as an exercise in self-congratulation. But the time may finally have come when art has been pre-empted by life. When the Oscar nominations were announced this year, they came out on the same day that Reagan made his State of the Union address. And for moralism, populist sentimentality, wild fantasy and topsyturvy illusionism, the President won hands down.

Most of the nominated films were respectable entertainments in a traditional melodramatic mold, of the kind that, for a couple of hours, pours the syrup of sentimentality in between fissures in the social fabric. In the prestige categories, there was heartbreaking populist Americana that imitated '30s family-drama-about-social-issues films, in the rural trilogy of *Country, Places in the Heart* and *The River*. There was heartwarming Americana, too, in *The Natural* and *The Karate Kid*. There were epic-scaled morality

plays, *A Passage to India* and *The Killing Fields*. And there was mid-cult masterpiece in *Amadeus*, which made Mozart into a soundtrack of soundtracks.

A preference for schlock pervades the Academy, the professional organization of perhaps the most sentimental souls in America—veteran workers in the mass entertainment industry. The Academy's uplift tradition is the flip side of Hollywood scandal. If Hollywood stardom has always had a touch of harlotry, the annual awards ceremony has been the public demonstration of its heart of gold.

Both images are part of a bigger picture: Hollywood was always our haven of false consensus. When the lights went down, we dreamed together in an America we never knew outside it (a fact that escapes audiences around the world, who think Hollywood is America). When it first became a national pastime, moviegoing was a unique shared experience for people from a welter of immigrant cultures and oppressed minorities.

The tub-thumping "Americanization" campaigns of the '20s were outstripped by the mass appeal of a Theda Bara, a Rudolf

Valentino, a Cecil B. DeMille. Although some moviemakers, like Jack Warner, did see political implications in their work, most only wanted to sell movie tickets to masses of people who had little in common besides a general experience of poverty. The moguls unerringly located a common denominator in family entertainment: cheap sentiment.

False consensus is making a big comeback in the '80s, propelled by the disintegration of America's central international role. But now we stage our morality plays in other theaters: Beirut, Grenada and, soon, in the skies themselves with that coming attraction, "star wars."

For self congratulation and spectacle, who needs the Oscars when we've got the Olympics and the Inaugural? The only problem is that the lights never come up on this feature. The dream machine underneath the White House never quits, even when it's time to face reality.

Hollywood is still a bastion of liberal feeling. The biggest box-office hits, however, no longer depend on the misty populism that wins Oscars. Consider three top box office draws this year:

Ghostbusters, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, and *Beverly Hills Cop*, none of which won prestige Oscar nominations. Some say this reflects a traditional distaste for rewarding high-profit items during Hollywood's holy rites. And that has been true before, although not invariably; all-time box-office hit *Gone with the Wind* swept the Oscars in 1939, for instance. Others note that comedy usually fares poorly, and that Steven Spielberg, like other members of the "movie brat" generation such as Francis Coppola and George Lucas, is not seen as a team player in the industry.

Maybe, though, these films just don't fit into the Academy, which for better or worse wears its heart on its sleeve. None of these films even pretends to compete with that melodrama of Reagan's double-bill. They are the movie within that movie. In *Ghostbusters*, we meet a yahoo gang of entrepreneurs selling (as J. Hoberman pointed out in the *Village Voice*) the perfect '80s product, a service for an imaginary need. In their boys' playground-world, they have pissing contests with laser guns and battle a bitch-goddess. (Bill Murray hollers, "Let's show this bitch how we do things downtown!")

In *Indiana Jones*, an American adventurer makes the world his playground. In *Beverly Hills Cop*, Eddie Murphy is the once and future black, mayhem incarnate in country club America. These films don't bother with moral choices for good guys and get-out-your-handkerchief resolutions. It's just hijinks all over the psychosocial map. The lowest common de-

nominator in these movies is brute force, slapstick that stings.

Other films registered a breakdown in pop culture conventions more critically, and predictably they too were slighted in nominations. In the Academy's own backyard was *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai*, a hectic pastiche of movie melodrama whose irony may have been too freewheeling for the practitioners of genre films. In a poorer neighborhood was the independent feature *Repo Man*, which, like *Suburbia*, expressed in punk aesthetic a rebellion against a world of generic products, options and emotions.

In another country altogether from that of mainstream entertainment was the understated, surprise-success independent feature *Stranger Than Paradise*. Director Jim Jarmusch offered up alienation on a plate and, like a sullen waitress, told us to take it or leave it. His three characters wouldn't

For self-congratulation and spectacle, who needs the Oscars when we've got the Olympics and the Inaugural?



FILM

An old message from the heart

By Manar Said

BEYOND THE WALLS, NOMINATED for an Academy Award in the foreign-language category, is an Israeli film that addresses the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The film spends a great deal of time humanizing a group of Palestinian political prisoners and their antagonists, Jewish criminal prisoners, all stuck in a maximum security prison in Israel. The film's premise is that all people, given enough time and good will, will discover they have more in com-

mon than what divides them.

Scripted by Benny Barabash and directed by his brother Uri, *Beyond the Walls* shows the brutality with which Palestinian political prisoners are treated in Israeli jails by interrogators and sometimes by the criminal prisoners. The film portrays the slowly-developing understanding, friendship and love between the two main leaders in the prison—Isam, leader of the Palestinian politicals (Mohammed Bakri), sentenced to two life sentences for "terrorist attacks," and Uri Mizrahi (Arnon Zadok), leader of the Jewish criminals and in for armed robbery.

F. Murray Abraham, AMADEUS; Judy Davis, PASSAGE TO INDIA; Ralph Macchio, THE KARATE KID;

Together the two men organize a hunger strike for concessions from prison authorities. Isam's hour of reckoning comes at the end of the movie, when prison authorities try to break the strike by offering him freedom. His decision to stay in prison wins the hearts of the other prisoners and leaves the audience with a bittersweet taste of what life is like for Palestinians committed to nationalist ideals.

Director Uri Barabash explained in an interview with *In These Times* that for him the movie was intended "above all to fight against prejudice." The message he wanted the audience to take home is simple: "If love, brotherhood and companionship are possible in such a hell of a place, why not here and now?" His chosen genre is the old-fashioned love story, with gut-level emotional appeal.

The film has played to packed audiences all over Israel, and some special screenings included en-

counter sessions with the actors and audience discussions of their reactions. Barabash says these were successful, because they allowed Arabs and Jews to talk out their feelings with each other. Barabash credits the movie's success precisely with its lack of political concreteness, which he dismisses as "propaganda and rhetoric."

"If you want to make a film for 12 people, go ahead," he says. His film was intended for a mass audience, and he chose to "speak through the heart, and maybe the stomach, not through the head."

The movie's strength is its sympathy for the Palestinian prisoners. However, a lack of understanding of Palestinian politics plagues the whole movie. In one heated discussion among the Palestinians, one of the few times Palestinians are seen talking among themselves, one says, "The only good Jew is a Jew who leaves Palestine." Isam answers, "Your fanatics and their fanatics are just the same. You're not interested in

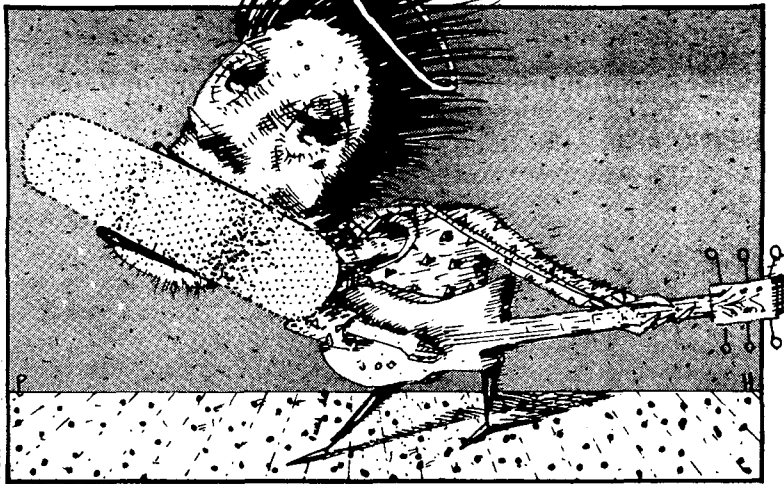
human beings, just ideologies."

In fact, no faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) officially espouses the racist doctrine of driving the Jews out of Palestine. This brief encounter is really an attack on ideology in all its forms, which Barabash says he finds useless in winning hearts for peace.

The fine ending is owed to the persistence of leading Palestinian actor Mohammed Bakri. According to the script, Isam was supposed to accept the prison authorities' offer to leave jail with his wife and son. But Bakri told Barabash on the set that if he agreed to play this scene as written, "he wouldn't be able to look his neighbors in the eye anymore." No Palestinian political prisoner would abandon ship like that, he argued, especially one like Isam.

Beyond the Walls will be distributed in the U.S. by Warner, and it may benefit not only from Oscar publicity but from the controversy it has stirred up in Israel. It was,

MEDIA BEAT



POP MUSIC

An oily sound from Band Aid

By Simon Frith

BAND AID'S "DO THEY Know It's Christmas?" has become the best (and fastest) selling British single ever—eight million copies at last count. It was number one for January, and record shops' Feed the World racks look permanent.

This is the sort of success story that transcends taste. I bought it not to be left out, so I could join the debate about what it all means. The basic decency of pop stars seems to be the general reading; the poor are always with us is the message for me.

But organizer Bob Geldorf's energy is truly admirable; I'm less clear about the "sacrifices" made by the rest of the stars—a morning's work? And the shenanigans on *Top of the Pops*, as faces jostled to be seen, added spice to the season's party game: guess who refused to join Band Aid. (Annie Lennox? Elvis Costello?)

Good for them, if so. Happy as I am that the record's made £6.5 million for Ethiopia (and the political implications of treating the famine as simply a natural disaster aside), "Do They Know It's Christmas?" is the apogee of the dispiriting pop era that dates from EMI's signing of Duran Duran. Music and marketing are now indistinguishable; the Band Aid story is, above all, a celebration of sales success.

The "them and us" convention of rock and roll has been turned around. "We" are now the haves, "they" the have-nots. "Do They Know It's Christmas?" is a dreadful record because of its tone. Not compassion (which involves self-doubt and fear), but smugness. "They" don't know it's Christmas, "we" do. And in encouraging pop fans to identify with this (white, comfortable) consensus—who can disapprove of famine relief?—Band Aid are really intervening in a specifically British pop argument.

The coal miners' strike in England has inspired the most directly political use of music since Rock Against Racism. More musicians have played more benefits this year than for at least the last five. Even Wham played, or rather mimed, on a strike support show. The miners are vilified by the rest of the mass media so pop sympathy matters.

But the miners are good for music too. Their struggle has restored an essential sense of divi-

sion to the rock and roll scene. "Whose side are you on?" has become an important question again, gives consumer choices an ideological edge. And as the government continues, semi-successfully, to starve men back to work (striking miners get no social security payments, no strike pay), pop celebrations of affluence lose conviction—before Ethiopia, food parcels were being raised for Britons.

Do good causes make for good music? The question has been posed most pressingly by groups not in Band Aid. The Redskins and Bronski Beat are male trios, booted skinheads determined to subvert the skins' usual macho-fascist image. Bronski Beat are gays, a falsetto voice over a synthetic beat, heavily influenced by Sylvester.

They've been stalwart performers at miners' benefits, but their real ambition is to make the realities of gay sex (hostility, anxiety, love) as normal a concern of chart pop as disco/leather fantasies. Their music is stylistically limited, but emotionally charged. Frankie says "relax"; the Bronskis say "we can't." They have, as a result, been dismissed by a surprising number of critics as "whiners," "obsessed" with their sexuality, no fun. In the '70s Tom Robinson's bitter, ironic, "Glad to Be Gay" was misheard as cheerfully sentimental. Bronski Beat have, so far, left less room for ambiguity.

The Redskins, by contrast, are Britain's first Trotskyist pop group, a punk trio with soul leanings and no doubt that sexual politics is a diversion from class struggle. Like Bronski Beat, though, they've signed a big deal with Decca even while remaining the most indefatigable of the miners' support groups, and the point is (I write without cynicism) that the strike has done them good, too.

The Redskins are exciting live for their sheer energy, but Chris Dean can't really sing and his songs need the political conviction—the sound of working-class solidarity—that derives from the miners' example. Without that example, the Redskins' stance would merely be a posture.

A correct posture, mind you. I'd take the romance of the rank and file over the oily sound of charity any day.

Simon Frith, who teaches sociology at the University of Warwick, is the author of *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock'n'Roll*.

Shakespeare's Greatest Hits

William Bennett, the rock'n'roll loving youngster who got a good Jesuit education and then brought the concept of Top 40 to the classics during his tenure as head of the National Endowment for the Humanities—calling for a national standard-setting list of "best books" that all high school students should read before graduating—is now Secretary of Education. He may be one of the few members of this administration who knows how undemocratic Plato's *Republic* (one of his favorites) is. Not everyone is as happy as Martin Peretz, who in a recent issue of *The New Republic* published what looks like a recommendation letter for the man. At the University of Minnesota several professors called an open meeting to debate Bennett's report "To Reclaim a Legacy," his parting shot from the NEH, sounding an alarm about slipping standards (a.k.a. creeping contemporaneity) in the humanities. Calling Bennett one of the "Reagan Knights," German professor Jochen Schulte-Sasse claimed that Bennett's approach "objectifies, isolates and alienates great texts as ahistorical cultural authority." Bennett promptly earned the title, enthusiastically endorsing the administration's proposed budget cuts for education. Non-classical college curricula, he argued, failed to make students "better culturally and morally," so parents need not mourn the passing of grants and loans for college education. The \$50,000 for a Harvard degree, he went on, might better be spent setting a kid up in business. He did not endorse establishing a fund for this purpose.

The Devil in Disguise

Bennett isn't the only one worried about current definitions of the humanities. The religious right is exercised by the grip of "secular humanism" in the public schools. The Moral Majority defines it as "an incorrect view of mankind, placing the created at the center of all things, rather than the creator." Now, "secular humanism" is forbidden in public policy. In the Education for Economic Security Act of 1984, federally funded "magnet schools" may not use funds for "any course of instruction the substance of which is secular humanism." The restriction, apparently a trade-off to conservatives to get the bill passed, was dismissed by one legislator who said the term was so vague it didn't mean anything. But liberal critics are alarmed, including People for the American Way executive director Tony Podesta, who calls the term "a hoax concocted by the far right, which uses the phrase to describe anything they don't like, from the theory of evolution to the works of Homer, Hawthorne and Hemingway." As secretary of education, Bennett may have to explain his top 10 favorite classics to one of the administration's favorite constituencies.

On the Best Authority

The Screen Actors Guild, dominated by liberals for the last 15 years, has been under attack since 1980 by a dissident group, Actors Working for an Actors' Guild. One of AWAG's co-founders, actor-producer Morgan Paull, has just declared his decision to run for "high guild office" this year. The only problem is that Paull is a producer, and a producer is, uh, management. Even Ronald Reagan thinks so, or did in 1960, when he stepped down as SAG president because, as he put it, "It's a guild tradition that no person who has a substantial producer interest in the making of motion pictures should serve as an officer or member of the board of directors." Paull already stepped down from his position as AWAG chair once, but now he says his resignation was unnecessary. The Department of Labor may disagree; in a similar case in the Writers Guild of America, it ruled against writer-producers.

What's Missing from This Picture?

They called it "the living room war," because television brought America's role in the war in Vietnam into our homes. Or at least, that's how it seemed. In a recent analysis of TV coverage of the war between 1968 and 1973, published in the *Journal of Broadcasting*, Oscar Patterson III found otherwise. He discovered that less than a quarter of the stories in his 180-program sample concerned Vietnam. Perhaps more significant was that only rarely did the stories include films or photos of combat. Pictures of dead or wounded featured in only about 2 percent of war-related stories. And body counts appeared, invariably, as pictureless statistics. Patterson thinks that "a few graphic, highly dramatic events" stuck in people's minds, changing their perception of their nightly news feed.

Linguistic Liberation

In a recent interview in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Czech poet and 1984 Nobel laureate Jaroslav Seifert explained the relationship between poetry and politics. "I write to feel free," he said. "What one looks for in language is the most elementary freedom—freedom to express innermost thoughts. That is the basis of all freedom, and it ultimately takes the form of political freedom."

"When I write," he continued, "I strive not to lie. If one cannot speak the truth, one should keep silent."

—Pat Aufderheide

know what to do with a movie like *Country*. In their seedy environs, a slam-bang entertainment like *Ghostbusters* might brighten up an aimless evening.

Some of the most energetic and interesting films of the year deserted traditional narrative, putting music and performance in the center instead. The best of *The Cotton Club*, whose story line was perfunctory, was in its ecstatic performance scenes (and word is that the best was left out, in obedience to mainstream marketing "wisdom" that left Richard Gere as bait for white audiences).

Jonathan Demme's expert control made the Talking Heads' *Stop Making Sense* as disorienting a disturbance as their music is. And Prince's *Purple Rain* offered to an MTV generation an emotional blowout that makes melodrama look tame. *Purple Rain* was more than a string of music videos; it was an extended musical improvisation on the theme of struggle for self-expression in a world without consensus about anything.

With this much evidence of change converging on the sound stages of Los Angeles studios, Hollywood's romance with itself is looking a little dated. You might even say it's in danger of being upstaged. When the Academy Awards are broadcast this year, they will be watched by tens of millions of people around the globe. And, if producers have anything to say about it, one of the featured celebrities will be the master of false consensus himself, Ronald Reagan. It's be a bit part, but he doesn't have to worry. He's now the star of his own show. ■

Sissy Spacek, *THE RIVER*.

shown at the Knesset, to predictably mixed reactions, and even settler fanatic Meir Kahane helped publicize the movie.

In Jerusalem, 3,000 people held a counter-protest when Kahane demonstrated against it, driving him away with tomatoes and chants. Barabash says he has been denounced as pro-PLO in the Hebrew press. On the other hand, many Palestinians criticize the film for not being realistic enough, and for avoiding mention of real political groups and sticking to emotions.

The main problem with the film from a Palestinian perspective is that it is able to capitalize on the pathos of the Palestinian tragedy without committing itself to any concrete solution. It leads the audience to believe that good will alone can overcome institutionalized racism. ■

Manar Said is a writer for *Al Fajr*, the Jerusalem Palestinian weekly, where she wrote extensively on *Beyond the Walls*.

Flynn

Continued from page 13

the cities are in a better position to take a progressive role to give the community a direct say in a growing private economy."

But that strategy is pursued in as non-confrontational a way as possible. For his part, Flynn has muted some of the populist rhetoric about bankers and real estate developers that enlivened his mayoral campaign, preferring to tout "public-private partnership" and do his best to maintain good relations with the business community. In interviews, more than one administration member mentioned Dennis Kucinich, Cleveland's populist mayor who tilted with the city's banks, developers and utility companies...and lost. The inference is clear.

Yet the limits of a friendly approach are also clear, especially in the failure of Flynn's efforts to get the city council to pass rent control and condominium conversion restrictions. Flynn advanced the bill as a housing package, including weatherization, arson prevention and home repair programs to gain the support of home owners. The real estate community wasn't fooled, however, and fought the tenant protections fiercely. Although the administration didn't help its cause by starting its lobbying effort late, there's wide agreement in tenant circles that the bill was doomed

to failure—many were surprised it lost by only one vote in the city council.

But when South Boston Councilor James Kelly, considered the real estate industry's pointman, introduced a "compromise," including most of the mayor's housing package but deleting rent control and restricting eviction protection in condo conversions to elderly and handicapped tenants, the mayor surprised his council allies and tenant advocates by backing the measure. All six councilors who favored the original bill voted against the compromise as a sell-out. Flynn defended his stand by pointing to the people who would be helped by the bill; others saw it as a political move to snatch victory from defeat.

Part of a movement?

What's selling out to one person is getting things done to another, an eternal debate best pondered by left scholastics. But Flynn's quickness to compromise can be criticized on pragmatic grounds as well. It blurred what should have been sharp political distinctions on the council, and the developers' friend Kelly got to take credit for some decent housing legislation. Massachusetts Tenants Organization (MTO) staff person Bob Van Meter recalls organizing meetings in one council district where constituents told their fence-sitting councilor of the need for tenant protection and the perils of gentrification.

Though the councilor bowed to developer pressure and voted against Flynn's bill, Flynn later praised him publicly for

backing the watered down version, to MTO's chagrin. "It really defused Flynn's—and our—ability to go after people who opposed us," Van Meter says.

Similar criticism comes from the council's left wing, which despite support for Flynn's populist approach and city priorities often feels left out of his game plan. "He doesn't see himself as part of a movement," says Councilor David Scondras, a leader of Boston's gay community and a Democratic Socialist of America member. Charles Yancey, a black councilor representing Dorchester and Mattapan, agrees. "He says the right things publicly, but there's very little consultation with us."

That sums up the reservations of many on the left, who hoped Flynn's election would change the city's power structure more thoroughly, moving from the mayor's office through the city council to enact the agenda he campaigned on. His individualist style has left some in the coalition that backed him spinning their wheels. "He's done progressive things, but not in a way that empowers people," says Fair Share organizer Adam Parker.

Turning his neighborhood participation rhetoric into reality has also been thorny for Flynn. A proposal to organize neighborhood councils to oversee city services and local development has been bogged down, with some areas of the city refusing to participate because they fear cooptation. Meanwhile, some Roxbury leaders have complained of being left out of plans to develop the blighted Dudley Street Station area. The Boston Redevelopment Agency, trying to lure office space to the neighborhood, says no real plans exist yet. But many in the community feel they should have been involved from square one.

"We're not opposed to development, but we're concerned about displacement, and we don't want another Copley Place," says Mel King, a leader of the coalition trying to get into the planning process. "This is a colonialist approach."

The criticisms voiced by King, Scondras, Yancey and others echo the terms of the mayoral race, which bitterly split Boston's left. When King and Flynn both made it into a runoff, defeating the downtown developers' well-financed candidate, it was hailed nationally as a victory for neighborhoods, and even on Boston's left some

stayed neutral in the race.

But not many. To partisans, there was a clear choice. King supporters could not get past Flynn's anti-busing past, or his opposition to abortion. And they saw a naive (if not racist) refusal to acknowledge the deep scars of racism in Boston, summed up in his repeated persistence in linking the problems of black Roxbury to white South Boston.

But Flynn's left supporters saw in the same statement a new inclusive politics that could bring together the disenfranchised on issues of poverty and exploitation. One left community organizing veteran now in the administration recalls trying to lobby the city council on tenant and consumer issues when Flynn was a councilor. "We would go to hearings and meetings and bring people out and prepare testimony. And then this person no one knew would get up and independently say everything that our leaders had prepared." When they were looking around for a candidate in the 1983 mayor's race, their natural choice was Flynn.

Sullivan acknowledges the tension between the coalition that backed Flynn and the administration. "There is a very exciting progressive strategy in City Hall. Is it a progressive movement? It's not, but it can contribute to that movement, challenge it to empower people who might consider themselves conservatives or even on the right."

The administration itself encompasses that spectrum. The media has begun to refer to a "Sandinista" faction on the left, including Dooley and the Fair Share veterans. Other city officials come out of Flynn's South Boston political past. It's an incredibly male administration, even for this traditional city. Although he has appointed women to prominent posts, only former 925 leader Nancy Snyder is among his closest policy advisors, and she functions nominally as his scheduler.

Where Scondras talks about "internalized oppression," and King discusses City Hall "colonialism," Flynn is impossible to engage in an open ideological discussion. But though he wouldn't use the word, class is the basis of his appeal. After Reagan's State of the Union address he stressed the president's own class politics.

"It's just the affluent community he's speaking to," Flynn told *In These Times*. But caught up in Reagan's coalition are people who "feel there has been a significant degree of abuse and waste in government," though they don't support his crusade to eliminate the public sector. "It's an emotional point of view," Flynn says, and he tries to counter that view emotionally, stressing rising infant mortality rates under Reagan, hospital closings, how welfare programs help the average person (read: not just blacks).

At the State of the Union gathering, his emphasis on inclusiveness was obvious. On a table behind the TV screen rested awards Flynn has received from community groups; a plaque from the Human Rights Campaign Fund—praising him for signing gay rights legislation—sat next to one from the Boston Police Running Club. Flynn delivered a low-key critique of Reagan's message, keeping moralism at a minimum. He professed wonder at Reagan's UDAG cuts, with his gee-whiz, head-scratching guile. It would seem to be the kind of incentive program that would suit the president, he opined, since in Boston a \$10 million grant drew \$400 million in private capital to develop Copley Place.

Then he opened up the floor to his guests, calling on state legislators, community activists and business people. He got a leading city banker to point out that the dangerous deficits were the result of Reagan's own tax cuts and military buildup, not spending on the poor. Social service workers recounted the statistics Reagan hadn't mentioned, the hospitals closed, infant deaths up. City officials detailed the impact of the proposed budget cuts on Boston. At the end he said a few words for the television cameras, and retired into his office with his wife and son. People stayed around eating anniversary cake for a while, and left relatively contented, though they didn't know exactly why.

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Museum

Continued from page 24

quated as the raffle of Sarah the mulatto. It wasn't conceded that blacks even had a history until around the time of the First World War when the first courses in Negro history were introduced in a few black colleges. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, founded in 1915 by Woodson, had established a grudging reputation of scholarly research into the African and African-American past and was tapped as a primary resource.

Woodson, an influential scholar who had studied at the University of Chicago, the University of Paris and had earned a Ph.D. in history from Harvard, also published the *Journal of Negro History*. He was a shrewd propagandist and his establishment of a week in February as "Negro History Week" helped to publicize the fact that blacks didn't just drop from the sky.

At the time there was widespread belief—among whites and blacks—that slavery had mercifully uprooted all vestiges of black Americans' African legacy. The process was merciful because, many believed, the legacy was valueless anyway.

Although Woodson was not alone in chronicling blacks' heritage (lesser

known scholars like William Wells Brown, J.W.C. Pennington, William C. Nell and J.A. Rodgers were also churning out volumes of work about Africans and their kidnapped descendants), he is nonetheless credited with being the initiator of it all. His

prestigious credentials probably have something to do with it.

Negro History Week evolved into Black History Month during the Black Studies Movement among militant students in the '60s. One of those '60s milit-

IN THESE TIMES FEB. 27-MARCH 12, 1985 23 ants visited DuSable Museum one recent Saturday in February and as he watched dozens of young black faces soaking in the knowledge the museum exudes, the thought crossed his mind that all the struggle just may have been worth it.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **Cynthia Diaz**.

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Roy Stanek

A SOLID MONUMENT

By Salim Muwakkil

WHEN MARGARET BURROUGHS and a few friends decided in 1961 to create a repository and showcase for the neglected historical contributions of black people, Negro History Week was commemorated during one week in February and accorded little prominence outside the black community. Now, 24 years later, the DuSable Museum of African American History stands in Chicago as a solid monument to Burroughs' vision and



Dr. Margaret Burroughs

the entire month of February is celebrated nationally as Black History Month.

The odds were against the growth of both the institution and the commemoration. It took painstaking efforts by many to help plug the gap in this nation's presentation of its own history. And, although blacks' inclusion into U.S. history is still inadequate, the changes have been significant.

"We started out in our house in '61," Burroughs explains to *In These Times*. "We had concluded that the need had become so great for some kind of institution dedicated to preserving, interpreting and displaying our heritage, that we just would have to create it ourselves. During our first year of operation we had a little more than 500 people visit. Last year we served more than 100,000 people in a building that now totals 20,000 square feet, and will soon include an additional 40,000 square feet. I guess one could safely say that we've grown some."

But that growth was hardly smooth. The museum didn't gain a permanent home until 1973, when it was granted the use of a large building that had been abandoned by the Chicago Park District. Throughout its history a lack of funds has often placed the institution on the brink of financial disaster. It's only been the determination of Burroughs herself that's ensured the museum's survival through those chronically lean times. She was a woman with a mission.

For many people, the name Dr. Margaret T. Burroughs is almost synonymous with that of the DuSable Museum; her dedication has been such that it was impossible to tell where she ended and the museum began. But Burroughs does have other irons in the fire. She's a prolific writer, who has had several children's books published, which she also illustrated. She is a poet and her artistic works in sculpture, oils, acrylics and batik have been exhibited in galleries and institutions worldwide. She is the founder of Chicago's world-reknown South Side Community Art Center and she has written articles for a number of national magazines.

Burroughs is also a veteran teacher in the Chicago school system, and she had witnessed first-hand how the exclusion of blacks in traditional history texts had fostered a crippling lack of self-esteem among her black students.

"There was nothing about our glorious past in Africa and very little about our immense contributions to the growth of this country," she recalls. "Africans were portrayed in the crudest of manners and I knew I just had to do something about it. 'How could we expect to develop healthy concepts about ourselves if we kept getting force-fed that inaccurate, racist material?' I asked myself."

The answer she received led directly to the establishment of this unprecedented institution, named for Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable—the first permanent settler in Chicago and a black man. DuSable Museum was the first of its kind in the country and has served as a prototype and inspiration for similar institutions.

The museum maintains an extensive collection of African and African-American art (including several original sculptures and paintings), a number of primary references, manuscripts and personal papers of pivotal figures in history, a library with more than 10,000 books on the subjects of Africans and black American history and culture and several auditoriums and meeting rooms for community use. The institution offers guided tours, films, lectures and a research exchange program with various colleges and universities throughout the country. It hosts and annual writers seminar and poetry festival that attracts writers from all over the world.

Slave auctions.

Among the most compelling items in the museum are the various notices and announcements of slaves for sale. Reading how Jacob August Jr. put up eight "valuable family slaves" for auction on Oct. 28, 1859 ("sold for no fault"), forces a focus on how blacks were treated in this country in the not too distant past. In 1833, Joseph Jennings announced a one-dollar raffle of "one Mulatto girl—Sarah."

"One of the things that makes DuSable unique is its collection of those bits and pieces of history," notes Maurice Marks, the interim president of the museum. Burroughs, who is director emeritus after an exhausting 24 years as director, has withdrawn from the day-to-day operations.

"Younger children really get a strong sense of historical change when they get a chance to see actual objects from past eras," Marks says. "That's why we're so pleased when February rolls around. We generally register a huge increase in our student attendance during Black History Month. Many of our youth, both black and white, get

The growth of Chicago's DuSable Museum is concurrent with the growing recognition of black people's contribution to world history.

exposed to things they don't see for the rest of the year. It's just a pity that it's a one-month thing."

But when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the man who is often called the Father of Negro History, initiated Negro History Week in 1926, it was just a one-week thing. Maybe in a hundred years or so, blacks' contributions to U.S. history will be fully included and Black History Month will be as anti-

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